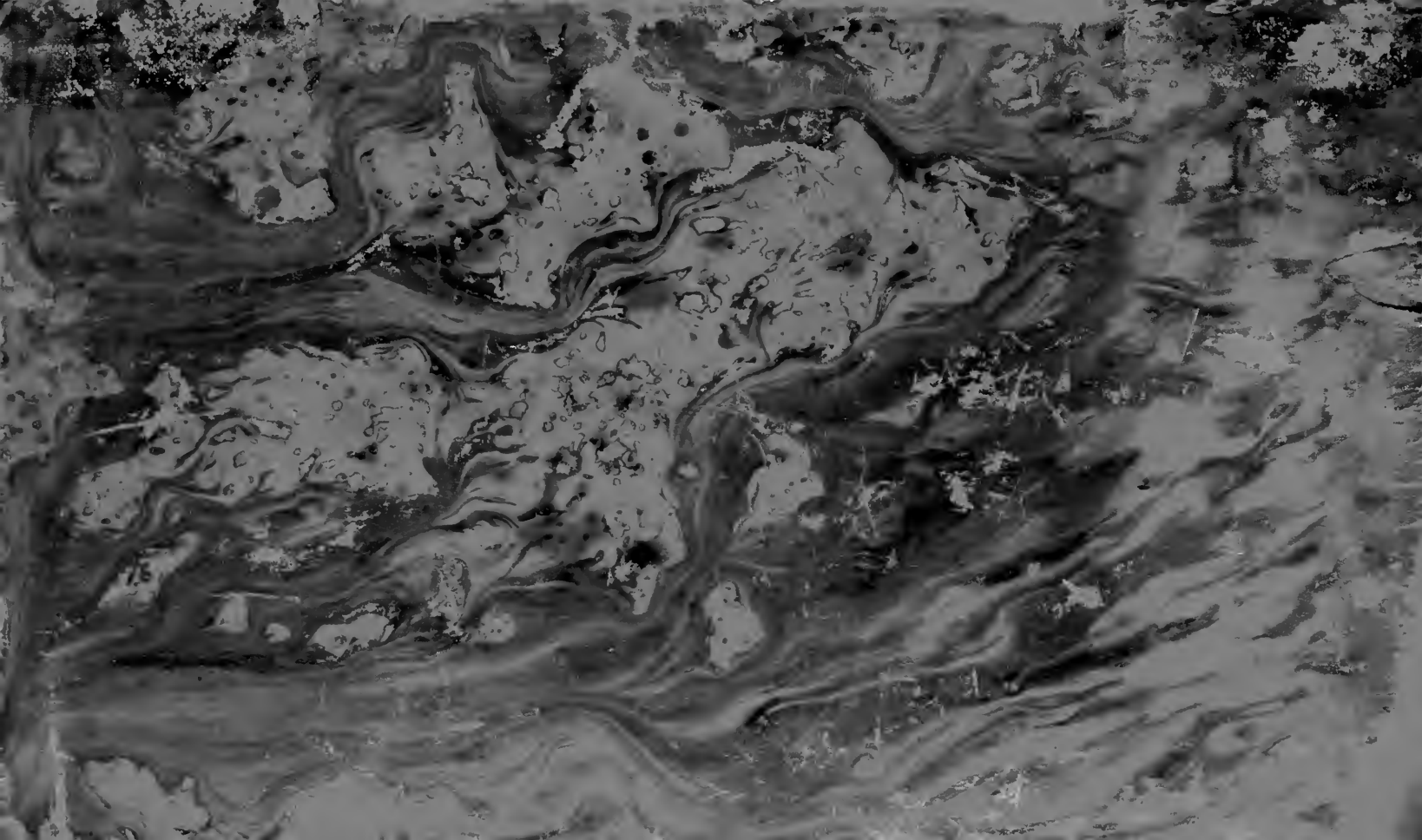

3/6.

See p. 34 Dyce's Supplement to the History of Cambridge

Let us unravel the immortal — art thou dead?
Give the key. —

Young's Night Thoughts

SPECIMENS

OF

LITERARY RESEMBLANCE,

IN THE WORKS

OF

POPE, GRAY,

AND OTHER CELEBRATED WRITERS;

WITH CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS:

IN

A SERIES OF LETTERS,

BY THE REVEREND

SAMUEL BERDMORE, D.D.

LATE MASTER OF THE CHARTERHOUSE SCHOOL.

Nullum eſt jam dictum quod non ſit dictum prius;
Quare æquum eſt vos cognoſcere & ignoſcere
Quæ veteres factitârunt, ſi faciunt novi.

TER. EUN. PROL.

LONDON:

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1801.

Printed by Luke Hanfard, Great Tunfille, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

My dear P.

YOU ſeem to wiſh that I would collect my ſcattered eſſays into a body, and go ſo far as to ſay, that the whole together would make a reſpectable volume; in which even men of letters might perhaps pick up ſomething of novelty and entertainment. I have ſo far complied with theſe flattering ſuggeſtions, as to take the laſt five letters, printed in the European Magazine, on Literary Resemblance; to which I have added a few others on the ſame ſubject, and preſent them, in this more

regular form,—to YOU, with certain expectation of a favorable reception:—not without diffidence to the PUBLIC.

Adieu.

To the Reverend PETER FORSTER,
Rector of Hedenham,
Norfolk, &c.

SPECIMENS

OF

LITERARY RESEMBLANCE.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR P.

THE remarks, which I ſent you a few days ago, on a paſſage in Pope's tranſlation of Homer, have engaged me ſo far in the conſideration of LITERARY RESEMBLANCE or IMITATION, and the ſubject is ſo curious and intereſting, that perhaps you will indulge me while I purſue it a page or two further.

In a periodical[a] paper, begun 1752, are cited many paſſages from Pope, ſaid never to have been taken notice of, as

" evidently borrowed, though they are " improved."

Superior Beings, when of late they ſaw
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,
Admir'd ſuch wiſdom in an earthly ſhape,
And ſhew'd a Newton, as we ſhew an ape.
Eſſay on Man, Ep. II. V. 31.

Utque movet nobis imitatrix ſimia riſum,
Sic nos cœlicolis, quoties cervice ſuperbâ
Ventoſi gradimur.

Again,

Simia cœlicolûm riſuſque jocuſque Deorum eſt
Tunc homo, quum temere ingenio confidit, et audet
Abdita naturæ ſcrutari, arcanaque Divûm.
Palingenius.

When the looſe mountain trembles from on high,
Muſt gravitation ceaſe? when you go by;
Or ſome old temple, nodding to its fall,
For Chartre's head reſerve the hanging wall.
Eſſay on Man, Ep. IV. V. 123.

If a good man be paſſing by an infirm building juſt in the article of falling, can it be expected that God ſhould ſuſpend the force of gravitation till he is gone by, in order to his deliverance? Wollaſton, Rel. Nat.

Chaos of thought and paſſion, all confuſed,
Still by himſelf abuſed, or diſabuſed;
Created half to riſe, and half to fall,
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;

Sole

Sole judge of truth, in endleſs error hurl'd;
The glory, jeſt, and riddle of the world.
Eſſay on Man, Ep. II. V. 13.

What a chimera then is man! what a confuſed chaos! what a ſubject of contradiction! a profeſſed judge of all things, and a feeble worm of the earth; the great depoſitary and guardian of truth, and yet a mere huddle of uncertainty; the glory and ſcandal of the univerſe.
Paſcal.

None of theſe paſſages can be new to you, but I have taken the liberty of tranſcribing them, as they furniſh occaſion for a few remarks: and I have ſelected the three above from ſeveral others; as a LEARNED CRITIC, whom, while on this ſubject, we cannot fail of having continually in our view, has choſen theſe very inſtances to illuſtrate ſome obſervations in his letter to Mr. Maſon on the MARKS OF IMITATION.

It will be thought perhaps ſomewhat ſtrange, that he takes no notice of the Adventurer. But we muſt ſuppoſe that either he had never read thoſe ingenious eſſays; or, if he had, that he thought them little worthy his attention; though, in general, the ſentiments, contained in this paper, ſeem to bear a very near relation

to thoſe, which he himſelf advances. Engaged, as he at all times was, in purſuits ſo much more important, he never, it ſeems, found an hour or two of leiſure to read more than [b] one work of the very learned and reſpectable Dr. Leland; and that one, only with an intention to refute it.

Be this as it may, he certainly ſtamps a value on theſe quotations by adopting them. He had too much reſpect both for himſelf and for his readers, to obtrude upon [c] "their conſideration, thoſe vulgar "paſſages, which every body recollects, "and ſets down for acknowledged imita-"tions."

If you compare the different manner of the two writers, you cannot but admire the ſuperior management and addreſs of the LEARNED CRITIC. In the Adventurer, the paſſages from Pope are brought forward without preparation, and confronted at once with the authors, ſaid to be imitated. In the LEARNED CRITIC they are uſhered in with all the ceremonies of a regular introduction, and preſented in

form. In the firſt cited inſtance, we obſerve a very remarkable difference between the one and the other:

Superior Beings, when of late they ſaw
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,
Admir'd ſuch wiſdom in an earthly ſhape,
And ſhew'd a Newton, as we ſhew an ape.

The Adventurer derives this ſingular paſſage from one Palingenius, an obſcure monk. Not ſo the LEARNED CRITIC. He did not wiſh to have it thought, that he could for a moment ſo far forget his own character, as to waſte any portion of his valuable time in turning over *ſuch traſh*; much leſs that the "*great poet*," ſo ſuperior to [d] ADDISON in true genius, could ever degrade himſelf by borrowing a thought from one of ſo inferior an order. More conformably therefore to that literary dignity, which, he was conſcious, belonged not leſs to himſelf, than to Pope, he [e] pronounces that the "*great poet* "*had his eye* on Plato, who makes So-

" crates ſay, in alluſion to a remark of " Heraclitus:"

Ὁτι ανθρωπων ὁ σοφωτατος προς ΘΕΟΝ πιθηκος φανειται. Hipp. Major.

Conſpiring with this laudable ſenſe, which the LEARNED CRITIC at all times fondly cheriſhed, of literary dignity, there appears to have been another motive for his conduct in this place. Had he derived the paſſage, as the Adventurer did before him, from Palingenius, he would have had no opportunity of exhibiting that maſterly diſplay of the true critic; and all the refined reaſoning which follows, with the nice diſtinction between the God of the Philoſopher, and the Superior Beings of the Poet, had been loſt.

Does it not require more than a common ſhare of critical acumen? a perſpicacity far beyond that of [f] " thoſe dull " minds, by which the ſhapes and appear- " ances of things are apprehended only in " the groſs?" to diſcriminate between a Heathen God, and a Superior Being. The real

ſtate

ſtate of the caſe ſeems to be, that the LEARNED CRITIC, in order to make the ſentence, which he has quoted, more accommodable to his purpoſe, concealed, even from himſelf, the true meaning of the philoſopher's words. The philoſopher, he ſays, refers προς ΘΕΟΝ, i. e. not to God, *the* God; but, agreeably to the idiom of the Greek language, as the word ſtands without the article, *a* God; one amongſt many; according to the generally received opinion of the age and country in which Plato lived; as appears more evidently by what follows:

Ομολογησομεν, Ιππια, την καλλιστην παρθενων προς ΘΕΩΝ γενος αισχρον ειναι.

Again,

Και δη προς γε ΘΕΟΥΣ ὁτι ε καλον το ανθρωπειον γενος. κ. τ. λ.

Thus the God of the Philoſopher is plainly no more, than one of the Superior Beings alluded to by the Poet; conſequently the application is, in both caſes, preciſely the ſame; addreſſed to the ſame order of Beings; and the ape, ὁ πιθηκος, becomes

becomes an object either of *deriſion* or *admiration*, as the one or the other may chance to fall in more aptly with the writer's views.

The *great poet*, it muſt be ſaid, appears in the hands of the LEARNED CRITIC to advantage; yet I doubt whether an indifferent looker on would, not, after all, be diſpoſed to think with the Adventurer, that more probably Pope at this time *had his eye* on Palingenius. There are ſome plauſible reaſons, which ſeem to operate very ſtrongly in favor of this opinion.

In a[g] paper, printed 1745, are pointed out ſeveral Expreſſions, Similies, and Sentiments in Palingenius, Tranſlated and Improved by Mr. Pope, in his Eſſay on Man, amongſt which this very ſimile of the ape is one; whence it appears that the *great poet* condeſcended now and then to amuſe himſelf with turning over *ſuch traſh*; and that he was tempted to turn over the pages of this obſcure author more than once. At the ſame time I ſuſpect that he was very little converſant in the writings of Plato.

If

If you are not quite worn down, I am tempted to remind you of an apparent imitation in Pope from Ovid, which I ſent you ſome time ago. It has at leaſt one merit, which I find is conſidered by other collectors of theſe curious trifles, as a primary recommendation. It has never, ſo far as I know, been [h] *blown upon* by any of the ſwarm, which uſually buz about the works of celebrated writers. In the Eloiſe you have theſe charming lines:

In each low wind methinks a ſpirit calls,
And more than echoes talk along the walls;
Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
From yonder ſhrine I heard a hollow ſound;
Come, ſiſter, come! it ſaid, or ſeem'd to ſay,
Thy place is here; ſad ſiſter, come away.
* * * * * * *
I come, I come.

Now turn to Ovid:

Eſt mihi marmorea ſacratus in æde Sichæus,
Appoſitæ frondes, velleraque alba tegunt.
Hinc ego me ſenſi noto quater ore citari,
Ipſe ſono tenui dixit, *Iliſſa, veni.*
Nulla mora eſt, *venio, venio,* &c.

Dido Æneæ, V. 99.

Here

Here are not only the ſame thoughts, and expreſſion, but, what the LEARNED CRITIC conſiders as a more decided mark of imitation, the ſame diſpoſition of the parts. Yet it occurs to me that you doubted, whether we could pronounce with certainty, that our Engliſh bard borrowed theſe thoughts from the Roman.

You will not think that I deal fairly with your favorite, if I do not here add another paſſage from the ſame poem, where you think, very juſtly, that Pope has much improved and embelliſhed the hint which Ovid gave him.

Not Cæſar's *empreſs* would I deign to prove;
No! make *me miſtreſs to the man I love.*
If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than miſtreſs, *make me that to thee.*

Si pudet uxoris, *non nupta, ſed hoſpita dicar;*
Dum tua ſit Dido, *quidlibet eſſe feret.*

Dido Æneæ, V. 167.

Every reader of taſte will agree in the opinion of Pope's ſuperiority. I am pleaſed to leave him with you under ſuch favorable circumſtances.

Adieu.

LETTER II.

My dear P.

THE ſubject, touched upon in my laſt, has taken ſuch ſtrong hold of my imagination, that I cannot forbear recalling your attention to it. I do this with the leſs ſcruple, as I do not mean to trouble you with any of thoſe [a] "*vulgar paſſages*," which the LEARNED CRITIC, with a delicacy highly commendable, "*ſpared his friend the diſguſt of conſidering.*" Under this reſtriction, it may not be unentertaining to ſee in what manner writers of the firſt rank, and acknowledged abilities, imitate their predeceſſors ſo, as to make what they borrow appear their own. You will not, I apprehend, require any apology from me, for ſuſpending awhile the deſign, with

with which I ſeemed to ſet out. I ſee no reaſon why, in our converſation or correſpondence with each other, we ſhould confine ourſelves within any one certain track. Whatever ſubject may accidentally be ſtarted in our way, we are, I think, at full liberty to follow, whitherſoever it may lead; and to continue the purſuit, ſo long as it affords amuſement.

We have often, you will recollect, read together, and been as often charmed with the introductory ſtanza to the firſt of Mr. Gray's two Pindaric Odes—the Progreſs of Poetry: where you have theſe admirable lines:

> Now the rich ſtream of muſic winds along,
> Deep, majeſtic, ſmooth, and ſtrong;
> Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
> Now rolling from the ſteep amain,
> Headlong impetuous ſee it pour;
> The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

The great excellencies of the ſublimeſt poetry are here united with an eaſe and elegance, which give to the compoſition ſo much the air of an original, that none of

of Mr. Gray's editors, or commentators on his works, ſeem to have ſuſpected an imitation.

Mr. Maſon, who appears to have been ſufficiently aſſiduous in bringing together every ſentiment, or expreſſion, from other authors, bearing reſemblance to any part of the writings of his reſpected friend, has produced no parallel to this exquiſitely beautiful paſſage.

Mr. Wakefield has alſo given us an edition of Mr. Gray's poems, enriched with many valuable and intereſting notes: in which he profeſſes [b] "not to be ſparing "of quotations from the poets," and con- "ceives "no author to be a more proper "vehicle for remarks of this ſort, at once "uſeful and entertaining, than Mr. Gray:" yet, in all his extenſive range through the fields of claſſic lore, he notices only one or two ſlight reſemblances.

Having thus taken the liberty of introducing Mr. Wakefield, I cannot ſuffer ſo favorable an opportunity to eſcape me, without returning to that candid and diſcerning

cerning critic my warmeſt thanks; in which I am perſuaded I ſhall be joined by every friend to Genius, and lover of the Muſes, for his very able and ſpirited defence of the Britiſh Pindar againſt the illiberal attacks of a prejudiced Commentator; whoſe puerile ſtrictures on theſe divine poems certainly caſt a ſhade on his literary character.

Even Dr. Johnſon himſelf, willing, as he evidently was, *from whatever cauſe*, to degrade the high character which Mr. Gray deſervedly held, of an original writer, with uncommon powers of fancy and invention, and, therefore, ever on the watch to detect any latent imitation, has been able to diſcover no inſtance of ſimilar compoſition.

Now allow me to ſubmit to your conſideration the following lines, which I am inclined to believe you have already in imagination anticipated, from one of the ſublimeſt Odes in Horace:

——— Quod adeſt, memento
Componere æquus. Cætera fluminis

Ritu

Ritu feruntur, nunc medio alveo
Cum pace delabentis Etruſcum
In mare; nunc lapides adeſos
Stirpeſque raptas, et pecus, et domos,
Volventis unà; non ſine montium
Clamore, vicinæque ſylvæ. B. III. O. 29.

With this ſtanza before us, will there not ariſe in the mind ſomething like *ſuſpicion?* that Mr. Gray, when he wrote the fine lines quoted above, had *his eye on* Horace. Allow me to mark the principal features of reſemblance. We have in each poet a ſtream, applied by the one to the various forms of poetry, by the other, to the viciſſitudes of human affairs, with eſpecial reference to political revolutions. It is conducted by both, firſt in a courſe of placid ſerenity, then in torrents of rapid impetuoſity; and marked at the cloſe, by the ſame ſtriking and impreſſive conſequence.

"The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar."

Very nearly a verbal tranſlation of the Latin text,

"Non ſine montium
"Clamore, vicinæque ſylvæ."

Here is certainly in theſe two paſſages an extraordinary coincidence of thought and imagery. In addition to which, the varying circumſtances, deſcribed in both, follow each other exactly in the ſame order. The attentive reader will however diſcover, under this general ſimilitude, a conſiderable difference in the mode of compoſition between the Britiſh and the Roman Pindar. Enough, perhaps you will think, to remove all appearance of direct imitation. It is moſt probable that Gray, without recurring to the text of Horace, has only copied from the traces, which a frequent peruſal had left upon his memory. This hypotheſis will appear more credible, when we analyze the different forms of compoſition. While the ſtream of Horace glides quietly into the Etruſcan ocean, with no other diſtinction than that of gentleneſs,

> " *Cum pace* delabentis Etruſcum
> " In mare ;"

the ſtream of Gray winds along with a marked

marked character, appropriate to his ſubject:

"Deep, majeſtic, ſmooth, and ſtrong."

Mr. Gray gives alſo peculiar grace and beauty to the piece, by his ſkilful uſe of the metaphorical ſtyle, blending the ſimile with the ſubject, ſo much in the manner of Pindar; and not making, as Horace has done, a formal compariſon of the one with the other.

I cannot here reſiſt the temptation of recalling to your recollection an exquiſitely fine paſſage in the book of Pſalms; in which ſimilar imagery is applied, under the ſame form, in a manner moſt awfully ſublime. It is where the divinely-inſpired Poet, magnifying the God of his ſalvation, deſcribes, in the true ſpirit of Eaſtern poetry, his protecting power as follows:

"Who ſtilleſt the *raging of the ſea*, and the noiſe of his waves, and the *madneſs of the people*."

Pſalm lxv. v. 7.

Pope has, in many inſtances, adopted this

graceful manner; and in none more ſucceſsfully than in that celebrated addreſs to his Guide, Philoſopher, and Friend, in the Eſſay on Man, Ep. iii.

> " Oh! while along the ſtream of time thy name
> " Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
> " Say, ſhall my little bark attendent ſail,
> " Purſue the triumph, and partake the gale?"

It will be rather a matter of curioſity, if I do not appear too trifling, to ſee how this beautiful paſſage would read, taken out of metaphor, and delivered in the plain comparative form. I will endeavour to render it in this form, as correctly as may be.—Oh! while your name flies abroad along the courſe of time, and gathers all its fame, like a ſhip going down the ſtream, and, with expanded ſails, gathering, as it goes, the wind; ſay! ſhall I attend, like a little bark? purſue the triumph, and ſhare in your fame, as the little bark partakes the gale, which ſwells the canvaſs of the larger veſſel. You will not, I truſt, require any further comment

to

to aſcertain the reſpective merits attached to theſe different forms of compoſition.

Mr. Gray, it will be ſeen, has ſtill further improved upon the Roman bard, by the addition of thoſe verdant vales, and golden fields of corn, through which, in the firſt diviſion of his ſubject, he conducts the peaceful ſtream:

Through verdant vales and Ceres' golden reign.

In the ſecond diviſion he ſimply deſcribes it, now ſwollen into an overflowing river, rolling impetuouſly down the ſteep deſcent; which Horace emphatically expreſſes from Homer[d], by the effects.

You, who are wont to view all works of taſte with ſo correct and critical an eye, cannot fail to obſerve, and at the ſame time to admire, the maſterly ſkill of theſe great artiſts in the execution of their ſeparate deſigns.

In Mr. Gray's Ode, the varying movements of muſic, or poetry, are very happily illuſtrated by the inconſtant current of a river; aſſuming in different places a

different character; preſenting you by turns, either with rich and beautiful proſpects, in ſoothing compoſure; or rouſing the mind into emotions of wonder and aſtoniſhment, by ſcenes of a bolder feature; rolling, with the roar of thunder, down broken rocks and precipices.

The imagery of Horace is equally well choſen, and ſuited to his purpoſe. His object was the courſe of events, which alternately take place in a popular government, at one time peaceful and orderly, diſpenſing eaſe, ſecurity, and happineſs to all around; at another, irregular, tumultuous, and turbulent, marking its progreſs with terror and deſtruction; like the changeful courſe of a river, the Tyber for inſtance, which was daily in his view, flowing at one time quietly and equably within its accuſtomed banks, at another,

> " Cum fera diluvies quietos
> " Irritat amnes;"

raiſing its ſwollen waves above all bounds, breaking with irreſiſtible fury through all

obſtacles, and, with wide-ſpreading deſolation, bearing down every thing in its way:

——— " lapides adeſos
" Stirpeſque raptas, et pecus, et domos."

It is the more remarkable that Dr. Johnſon ſhould have overlooked this apparent imitation, when he has choſen, with Algarotti he ſays, to conſider the Bard as an imitation of the Prophecy of Nereus. This is more than Algarotti any where affirms. In his letter to Mr. ° How he ſays that the Bard is very far ſuperior to the prophecy of Nereus.

" Che quel vaticinio mi ſembra di gran lunga ſuperiore al vaticinio di Nereo ſopra lo eccidio di Troia."

In which opinion Dr. Johnſon does not ſeem equally diſpoſed to concurr with the learned Italian.

This is a queſtion, which does not admit of argument. If there be a man, who can hear the ſudden breaking forth of thoſe terrific ſounds in the exordium,

at which *ſtout Glouceſter ſtood aghaſt*, and *Mortimer cried to arms*, and not thrill with horror: if there be a man, who can behold the awful figure of the Bard, in his *ſable veſtments, with his haggard eyes, his looſe beard* and *hoary hair*, which

"*Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air,*"

and hear him

"*Strike the deep ſorrows of his lyre,*"

without emotion: this man, if ſuch a man there be, has no feelings, to which a critic on the works of a great poet can apply. It were as vain and uſeleſs to converſe with a man of this deſcription on ſuch ſubjects, as to commune with a deaf man on the enchantments of muſic, or with one blind on the charms of beauty.

While I am converſing with you, who are neither deaf, nor blind, I am tempted to enter more deeply into the examination of this aſtoniſhing performance; which I ſhall conſider in rather a new light. Every reader is ſtricken with the wildneſs of the ſcenery

ſcenery—the grandeur and ſublimity of thought—the boldneſs of the imagery—the fire and enthuſiaſm which animate the ode throughout. Let me now more particularly call your attention to the highly figurative and majeſtic diction, which pervades the whole, involved in that awful obſcurity, ſo ſuited to the occaſion, and characteriſtically belonging to the language of prophecy. This obſcurity has, I know, been objected to by men of ſome note, who muſt ſurely have conſidered the ſubject very ſuperficially, as a defect; for which, they ſay, while it ſheds ſo much darkneſs over the whole compoſition, as to preclude from the view of the diſappointed reader almoſt all its beauties, no merit in other reſpects, however great and tranſcendent, can compenſate. For myſelf, I have no ſcruple in confeſſing, that this very obſcurity, ſo much condemned by judges of this deſcription, has always appeared in my eye a diſtinguiſhing excellency of the poem. The tiſſue woven with bloody hands by the

the Bard, in concert with the ſpectres of his murdered brethren,

"*The winding ſheet of Edward's race,*"

on which were to be traced their impending misfortunes, has in it ſomething tremendouſly ſublime, analogous to the emblematical images, under which are uſually conveyed the prophetic denunciations of divine wrath in the ſacred writings: of theſe every one feels the effect. In the ſame ſublime ſtrain the deſcendents of Edward are in ſucceſſion deſignated, not by name, but by ſome myſtic alluſion; under which the figures aſſume a more terrific appearance, from the miſt which is gathered round them. The tragical fate which ſeverally awaits them, is denounced under the repreſentation of ſome terrible image, encompaſſed with almoſt impenetrable darkneſs, impreſſing on the mind a dreadful foreboding of future calamity, the more alarming, as its nature, extent, and effect are unknown and undefined.

From

From theſe ſcenes of horror the Bard is rapt, by a ſudden and unexpected tranſition, into viſions of glory; and the imagination, but now appalled by terror, and ſunk into diſmay, is rouſed by the proſpects of happier events, deſcried in dazzling ſplendor, though ſtill with the ſame indiſtinctneſs of imagery, at a diſtance, into tranſports of joy and triumphant exultation over Edward, on the ultimate defeat of his impious attempt.

The tranſcendent merit of Mr. Gray's manner can no way be better illuſtrated, than by a comparative view of the manner adopted by Horace in the ode, of which Dr. Johnſon is ſo willing to think the Bard an imitation. The appearance of Nereus, engaged in the important office of calming the winds, in order to ſing the cruel fates of Paris, has a ſolemnity in it, which raiſes the mind to an expectation of ſomething great and momentous; yet, when we contemplate the figure of Nereus, preſented, as he is, with no appropriate inveſtment, with no local advantages,

tages, ſtationed we know not where, uttering his denunciations we know not whence; with what ſuperior dignity and ſpirit does the BARD appear! in the romantic ſituation and intereſting attitude deſcribed by Gray, *ſtriking* with ſolemn accompaniments *the deep ſorrows of his lyre.*

Mr. Gray will riſe ſtill higher in your opinion, as you proceed. You have ſeen how he aggrandizes his ſubject by his manner of treating it. What has Horace done? He has recounted, in the ſimpleſt mode of narration, the adventures of Paris, as he found them related by Homer. Every circumſtance is exactly detailed, without any veil or diſguiſe. Every agent introduced is repreſented under his known character, and marked by his proper name. No room is left for doubtful and alarming conjecture. The whole tale is told in the plaineſt terms. In the concluding ſtanza we are informed, in the ſame ſimple manner, without any preparation denoting ſo important an event, that after a certain term of delay, occaſioned by the anger of Achilles, Troy would

would be conſumed by the Grecian fires.

I would not wiſh you to ſuſpect that I mean to undervalue the works of our old friend, whom I was early taught, with you, and ſtill continue to love and admire. I have often read this very ode with pleaſure and approbation. It is an elegant and beautiful compoſition. But is there in it any, even the fainteſt, trait of reſemblance to the Bard of Gray? or are you diſpoſed, with Dr. Johnſon, to allow Gray only a ſecondary merit, as a copyiſt from the firſt inventor?—Inventor of what?—What has Horace invented, which Gray has imitated? Gray neither wanted nor ſought aſſiſtence elſewhere. He conſulted his own great mind. There only did he find the ſource of that *rich ſtream*, which he has conducted with conſummate addreſs, now in majeſtic ſolemnity, now, as occaſion required, with impetuous rage and violence, through the various parts of this unrivalled poem; and every man of taſte and feeling follows

lows its courſe with rapture and enthuſiaſm.

Having thus faintly expreſſed the high reverence which I bear to one of ſo ſuperior an order, I will here cloſe this long, yet, may I hope? to *you*, not tedious diſcuſſion.

Adieu.

LETTER III.

My dear P.

The obſervations which I offered on two beautiful paſſages, the one from Gray, the other from Horace, have not exhauſted the ſubject, on which I was then treating. Allow me to ſubmit to your conſideration another inſtance of ſimilar coincidence, which has always appeared to me very remarkable, though it ſeems to have eſcaped the notice of other readers. In the Bard we have a picture, exhibiting the death of Richard II. by famine, as recorded by Archbiſhop Scroop and the older writers, executed by the boldeſt pencil of creative Fancy:

> Fill high the ſparkling bowl,
> *The rich repaſt prepare;*

Reſt

Reft of a crown he ſtill may ſhare the feaſt.
Cloſe by the regal chair
Fell Thirſt and Famine ſcowl
A baneful ſmile upon their baffled gueſt.

Compare theſe fine lines with the following, equally fine, lines of Virgil:

——— Lucent genialibus altis
Aurea fulcra toris; *epulæq. ante ora paratæ*
Regifico luxu. Furiarum maxima juxta
Accubat, et manibus prohibet contingere menſas,
Exurgitque facem attollens, atq. intonat ore.
Æn. B. VI. L. 603.

The two poets chanced to have the ſame ſubject in contemplation. Your attention will be caught at firſt view by a ſtriking ſimilarity of manner in the execution of their deſign. It will be obſerved alſo, that this manner, ſo admirably ſuited to their purpoſe, is out of the common way, very far beyond the reach of common minds. In order to aggravate the diſtreſs, and to render the inflicted torments more poignantly excruciating, a rich and luxurious banquet is, with exquiſite refinement, previouſly prepared by each of theſe great maſters, and ſpread in ſplendid

ſplendid array before the face of the unfortunate ſufferers; the ſight of which, while they are withheld from partaking it, irritates the cravings of hunger, even to agony. Their conſtrained abſtinence is enforced in both by the ſame poetical machinery. In Gray, *Fell Thirſt and Famine* exactly correſpond to the *chief of the Furies* in Virgil. The *baneful ſmile, ſcowled on the baffled gueſt*, in the former carries with it, perhaps, more of ſcorn and mortifying inſult, than the more direct oppoſition of the Fury, with her *up-lifted torch and thundering voice*, does in the latter. Still, however, the imagery—the turn of thought—the plan and ſtructure of the piece, and the diſpoſition of the parts, are in both inſtances preciſely the ſame.

Whence this extraordinary congruity aroſe, or by what means it was effected, I will not take upon me to determine. So far I will venture to ſay, and I aſſure myſelf of your cordial concurrence, that Gray's charming ſtanza, when ſeen by

itſelf, has very much the air of an original.

" Common ſenſe," we are told on high authority, " directs us for the moſt part " to regard reſemblances in great writers, " not as the pilferings, or frugal acquiſi- " tions of needy art, but as the honeſt " fruits of genius, the free and liberal " bounties of unenvying nature."

The LEARNED CRITIC calls for this liberality of judgment in behalf of the *Poets*, with whom particularly he was concerned. I find myſelf, juſt at this preſent, very much diſpoſed to claim the ſame conſideration for the writers in *Proſe*; having in my mind two paſſages from two celebrated writers in that form, which I am ſtrongly tempted to ſend you.

The late Dr. Ogden, who in my judgment holds the very *higheſt rank* amongſt the *moſt eminent* preachers, in one of thoſe excellent ſermons on the fifth commandment, addreſſing himſelf to a young man, whoſe behaviour he ſuppoſes leſs correct than it ought to be, enforces the obligations

gations of children to their parents in a ſtrain of irreſiſtible eloquence, as follows:

" " Now ſo proud! ſelf-willed! inexora-
" ble! thou couldſt then only aſk by wail-
" ing, and move them by thy tears; and
" they were moved. Their heart was
" touched with thy diſtreſs. They re-
" lieved and watched thy wants, before
" thou *kneweſt thine own neceſſities, or*
" *their kindneſs.* They clothed thee; *thou*
" *kneweſt not that thou waſt naked.* Thou
" *aſkedſt not for bread;* but they fed
" thee."

Did you ever read? or can any young man, however proud, ſelf-willed, inexorable, ever read this impaſſioned addreſs without emotion? Nor can we eaſily perſuade ourſelves otherwiſe, than that the reſpectable author was here tranſcribing the affections of his own heart; for, as appears from the ſhort memoirs of his life, drawn up and prefixed to an edition of his ſermons, in two volumes, by the late Dr. Hallifax, he was a truly affection-

ate and dutiful ſon, ſuch a one as "maketh "a glad father."

It may not be unintereſting to ſee the ſame thoughts worked up into an elegant form by an admired Ancient. Xenophon, you will recollect, in his Memoirs of Socrates, introduces the Philoſopher diſcourſing in the following terms:

Η γυνη ὑποδεξαμενη το φορτιον τυτο, ϛαρυνομενη τε και κινδυνευυσα περι τω ϛιυ, και μεταδιδυσα της τροφης, ᾗ και αυτη τρεφεται, και συν πολλῳ πονῳ διενεγκυσα και τεκυσα τρεφει τε και επιμελειται, ὐδε προπεπονθυια ὐδεν αγαθον, ὐδε ΓΙΓΝΩΣΚΟΝ ΤΟ ΒΡΕΦΟΣ ΤΩ ΟΤΟΥ ΕΥΠΑΣΧΕΙ, ὐδε ΣΗΜΑΙΝΕΙΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΤΟΥ ΔΕΙΤΑΙ.

XEN. MEM. l. ii. c. 11.

The ſentiments under the expreſſions, marked in the Engliſh text by Italics, and by ϛapitals in the Greek, bear, you will take notice, a ſtriking reſemblance to each other; and, though evidently moſt juſt and natural, are, ſo far as my obſervation goes, no where to be found, but in

theſe two paſſages. If you read the whole chapter, from which the lines above are taken, and the peruſal will abundantly repay your trouble, you will find throughout a great ſimilarity of thought between the Philoſopher and the Preacher. In the ſhort paſſage immediately before us, the Preacher appears to have given more of pathos to the ſubject, by a judicious amplification, illuſtrating the general ſentiment by ſpecific inſtances, very happily choſen to affect the feelings.

Dr. Ogden was undoubtedly well verſed in all the works of Xenophon. May we not therefore ſuppoſe? without any derogation from his merit, that, while he was compoſing this admirable ſermon, his thoughts might take their color from the tints, collected upon his mind by frequent communication with this fine writer.

Whatever may be your opinion on this point, you will not, I am perſuaded, regret my having called your attention to an old acquaintance, nor think your time

miſemployed in comparing the works of two ſuch authors as Xenophon and Dr. Ogden; from either of whom you cannot fail, as you read, of receiving the higheſt gratification.

I could amuſe myſelf, if I thought it would be equally amuſing to you, with tracing theſe literary reſemblances ſtill further. But I rather wiſh you now to conſider with me another ſpecies of imitation, if it may be ſo called; "the management of which," [d] Dr. Hurd ſays, "is to be regarded, perhaps, as one of the niceſt offices of *Invention*;" I mean, the alluſions often made by the firſt writers to old rites and ceremonies, or to prominent circumſtances in ancient or modern hiſtory.

Dr. Hurd ſomewhere notices a beautiful ſpecimen of this delicate alluſion in a poem, called the Spleen, by Mr. Green of the Cuſtom-houſe. The Poet is recommending exerciſe, as a ſovereign remedy againſt that depreſſion of ſpirits, and thoſe hypocondriac affections, which are always

always produced by this morbid humor; and exemplifies his doctrine by one of the ſimpleſt and moſt trivial modes, which can poſſibly be conceived.

Fling but a ſtone.

You will not diſcover in this plain ſentence any great effort of imagination, any rich coloring of expreſſion, any thing either of novelty or beauty. But when to this ſo common an action is added the unexpected image, under which is conveyed the promiſed benefit,

The giant dies,

all the circumſtances attending an intereſting hiſtory, which we have been accuſtomed to read from our childhood, and to think important from an early reverence for the [e] writings, in which it is contained, are at once recalled to the mind; and give to the paſſage a life and ſpirit beyond what the greateſt refinement of thought, with all the embelliſhment of language, could ever have produced.

Fling but a ſtone, the giant dies.

Of the ſame claſs with this I have always conſidered that fine imagery, under which Mr. Gray repreſents the indications of genius, ſuppoſed to diſcover themſelves in the infancy of our immortal Shakſpeare —the early promiſe of his future greatneſs. On the awful appearance of NATURE, who comes in a majeſtic form to inveſt her *darling* with the happily-fancied enſigns of that high office, which he was deſtined afterwards to fill with ſuch aſtoniſhing powers,

——— the[f] *dauntleſs child*
Stretch'd forth his *little hands*, and ſmil'd.

Did you ever contemplate the animated figure of this *dauntleſs* child without recurring, at the ſame time, in your mind, to the fabulous deſcription of Hercules in the cradle? graſping in his infant hands the ſerpents, and throwing them playfully at the feet of his father,

Ητοι αρ' ως ειδοντ' ΕΠΙΤΙΤΘΙΟΝ Ηραχληα
Θηρε δυω χειρεσσιν απριξ ΑΠΑΛΑΙΣΙΝ εχοντα
Συμπληγδην, ιαχησαν· οδ' ες πατερ' Αμφιτρυωνα
Ερπετα δεικαναεσχεν, επαλλετο δ' υψοθι χαιρων,
Theoc. Idyl. xxiv.

In

In theſe examples every thing is plain and obvious. The propriety and aptitude of the alluſions are ſeen at once. But it has often occurred to me, that we loſe many beauties in the ancient poets from not knowing the facts, to which, probably, frequent alluſions are made, to us, at this diſtance of time, totally inexplicable.

I have been led into this train of thought by an obſcure paſſage in one of the Odes of Horace; which has created no ſmall perplexity amongſt the ſcholiaſts and commentators, ſuch of them I mean, as have ventured to remark upon it; for ſome of the firſt order, as Bentley, Geſner, and others, with a reſerve not very unuſual where real difficulties occur, have kept a wary ſilence.

——— Hinc *apicem rapax*
Fortuna cum *ſtridore acuto*
Suſtulit, hic poſuiſſe gaudet.

CARM. LIB. 1. O. 34.

It

It may not be unamuſing to obſerve for a moment, how theſe[g] *learned Critics* puzzle themſelves in endeavouring to explain what, by their awkward attempts, they very plainly ſhew that they did not at all underſtand.

One gravely interprets the term *rapax* by *mutabilis*, *acuto* by *luctuoſo*.

Another, by an expoſition ſtill more extraordinary, renders *rapax* ſuſtulit by *clam* ſuſtulit.

A third, with great importance, on the words cum *ſtridore acuto*, " his verbis " puto ſignificari Fortunæ commutatio- " nem, quæ vix intelligi poteſt ſine " magno ſonitu ac fragore. Stridor enim " ſonitum ac ſtrepitum ſignificat, non " clamorem."

Thus do they go blundering on, rendering " confuſion worſe confounded," not attempting, any of them, to deſcribe the unuſual figure which Fortune is here made to aſſume. Had they attended a little more to this circumſtance, it would, perhaps,

perhaps, have ſaved them much of the trouble, in which they have involved both themſelves and their readers.

Bene, ſays a modern Editor, in general an acute and ſagacious interpreter of his author, Baxter, cum *ſtridore acuto*, cùm ante poſuerit *rapax*, adinſtar ſcilicet procelloſi turbinis.

This roar of ſtorm and thunder ſeems alſo to have rumbled in the ears of M. Dacier; though, when on ſecond thoughts he explains *ſtridore acuto* by [h] the ſounds made by the wings of Fortune, he ſeems to have caught a glimpſe of the real image, which the Poet had in his eye, that of a ſoaring eagle; as will appear from an extraordinary occurrence related by the hiſtorian. I will beg leave to tranſcribe the paſſage.

" Ei (Lucumoni) carpento ſedenti cum uxore, AQUILA ſuſpenſis demiſſa leniter alis *pileum* aufert, ſuperq. carpentum cum *magno clangore* volitans rurſus, velut miniſterio divinitus miſſa, capiti apté reponit; inde ſublimis abiit. Accepiſſe id augurium

augurium læta dicitur Tanaquil, perita, ut vulgo Etruſci, celeſtium prodigiorum mulier. Excelſa et alta ſperare complexa virum jubet. Eam alitem ea regione cœli, et ejus Dei nunciam veniſſe. Circa ſummum culmen hominis auſpicium feciſſe. Levâſſe humano ſuperpoſitum capiti *decus*, ut eidem divinitus redderet." Liv. lib. i. c. 34.

Wonders and prodigies ever attend the remoter periods of great States and Kingdoms. They never fail to be recorded in their earlier annals; are ſuperſtitiouſly delivered down from father to ſon, and received with an eaſy and willing credence amongſt the populace. Of this deſcription is the tale of LUCUMO and the EAGLE; which I doubt not was as familiar amongſt the Romans, as well-known, and as often repeated, as with us the legends of King Arthur, and the Knights of the Round Table, Guy Earl of Warwick, St. George and the Dragon, &c.

Thus

Thus it appears, that the Poet, when he attributed ſo uncommon a figure to Fortune, with ſo ſingular a mode of action, alluded to a popular ſtory in every body's mouth. The alluſion, of courſe, was immediately acknowledged by the reader, and felt in all its force.

By the light hence thrown on the ſubject, whatever there was of obſcurity has vaniſhed, all difficulties are done away, every expreſſion reſumes its uſual and proper ſignification, and the ſentence becomes clear and luminous.

The term *rapax* is not, you ſee, to be underſtood as epithetical to Fortuna, but to be taken, as adjectives are often uſed by the poets, adverbially, and joined in conſtruction with the verb ſuſtulit. *Rapax* ſuſtulit, i. e. [1] *rapaciter* ſuſtulit, *rapuit*.

By the expreſſion *ſtridore acuto*, the great ſtumbling-block of the commentators, are plainly ſignified, as intimated by a vague conjecture of the learned Frenchman, the ſounds made by the eagle clap-

clapping its wings, and ſcreaming in its flight; which the hiſtorian expreſſes by the words *magno clangore.*

I will not fatigue you by dragging you further through theſe dry and tireſome diſquiſitions into the niceties of grammatical arrangement, which, I ſuſpect, are not much to your taſte. You will not however think that labor vain, which tends in any way to elucidate the ſenſe of a favorite author, and to draw forth into more open view a latent beauty, which has ſo long lain buried under the accumulated rubbiſh thrown over it, from time to time, by profeſſed critics and laborious annotators. Repoſing ſecurely on this aſſurance, for the preſent I will bid you

Adieu.

LETTER IV.

My dear P.

When, on opening a letter from your old Correſpondent, the expreſſion of LITERARY RESEMBLANCE again meets your eye, I am fearful whether you will not feel ſomewhat of alarm. It is well, indeed, if, by pacing ſo often the ſame beaten round, you do not by this time find yourſelf wearied, and your ſpirits exhauſted. Notwithſtanding all this, I cannot reſiſt the temptation of again treſpaſſing on your patience, and laying before you another inſtance of extraordinary co-incidence from the works of a great maſter, who has ſo ably and copiouſly treated on this very ſubject through its

its ſeveral branches. The inſtance, which I have in view, coming from ſo high authority, to which, you and all men of learning will very readily allow, a peculiar deference is owen, I will give you the text of the LEARNED CRITIC, and that of the French Annotator, the other author alluded to, ranged in ſeparate columns, by the ſide of each other: under which form, you will have a more comprehenſive view of the whole, and be enabled to compare the two authors with the greater eaſe and accuracy.

MR. HURD.

Taking advantage of the nobleſt privilege of his art, he breaks away in a fit of prophetic enthuſiaſm, to foretell his ſucceſſes in this projected enterpriſe, and under the imagery of the ancient triumph, which comprehends or ſuggeſts to the imagination whatever is moſt auguſt in human affairs, to delineate the future glories of this ambitious deſign. The whole conception, as we ſhall ſee, is *of the utmoſt grandeur and magnificence.*

F. CATROU.

La vivacité avec laquelle le Poëte decrit *allegoriquement* la dedicace, qu'il doit faire de ſon Enëide a Auguſte, ſous l'idée de la dedicace d'un Temple, eſt admirable. C'eſt *un des beaux morceaux de poeſie, qu' ait fait l'auteur.*

Primus ego in patriam mecum modò vita ſuperſit,
Aonio rediens deducam vertice Muſas.

The projected conqueſt was no leſs than that of all the Muſes at once; whom, to carry on the decorum of the Allegorie, he threatens to force from *their high and advantageous ſituation on the ſummit of the Aonian mount, and to bring them captive into Italy.*

Virgile fait entendre ſous une *allegorie ingenieuſe*, que quand il aura publié ſon Ænéide, et quand il aura dedié ſon temple par des jeux, il fera *deſerter la Grèce aux Muſes, qui quitteront l'Helicon, pour venir habiter l'Italie.*

Ancient conquerors were ambitious to conſecrate their glory to immortality by a temple or other public monument, * *which was to be built out of the ſpoils of the conquered cities or countries.*

Navali ſurgentes ære columnas. 29.

Virgile ne dit pas ſans raiſon, que de l'airain des vaiſſeaux, enlevez à Cléopatre il fera fondre les colonnes de ſon temple. Auguſte avoit en effet tiré * *tant de bronze des vaiſſeaux, qu'il avoit pris d'Actium, qu'il eut de quoi en ériger les colonnes du temple, qu'il bâtit à Apollon, ſur le mont Palatin.*

This, the reader ſees, is ſuitable to the idea of the great work propoſed, which was out of the remains of Grecian art to compoſe a new one, that *ſhould compriſe the virtues of them all; as, in fact, the Æneis is*

Et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam.

On voit ici que ce temple de marbre, que le Poëte doit bâtir, à ſon retour du Levant, et que cette dedicace, qu'il

known to unite in itſelf whatever is moſt excellent, not in Homer only, but univerſally in the wits of Greece.

The everlaſting monument of the marble temple is then reared.

Et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam.

The dedication of the temple is then made to the Poet's Divinity, Auguſtus.

In medio mihi Cæſar ent templumq. tenebit.

The expreſſion is emphatical, as intimating to us, and prefiguring the ſecret purpoſe of the Æneid; which was in the perſon of Æneas to ſhadow forth and conſecrate the character of Auguſtus. *His Divinity was to fill and occupy the great work.*

Illi victor ego, et tyrio conſpectus in oſtro, &c.

To ſee the propriety of the figure in this place, the reader needs only be reminded of *the book of Games* in the Æneid, which was purpoſely introduced in honour of the Emperor, and not, as is *commonly* thought, for a mere

doit faire, ſont *une allegorie.* Il veut dire qu'à ſon retour d'Orient, où il ira perfectionner ſon Æneïde, et y mettre la dernière main, il viendra la publier en Italie. En un mot, qu'il *donnera un ouvrage plus parfait que ces des Grecs.*

Toute l'Æneïde ſe rapporte à Auguſte. Il en eſt la fin, et le modele ſur lequel le Poëte forme ſon heros. *De-là ce temple, dont Auguſte ſera la ſeule Divinité.*

La dedicace du temple qu'erigera Virgile à Auguſte ſera celebrée par des jeux de toutes les ſortes, des courſes de chars, des combats du ceſte, et des pièces de Théatre l'orneront.

trial of ſkill between the poet and his maſter. The Emperor was *paſſionately fond of thoſe ſports*, and was even the author or reſtorer of one of them.

Necnon et ſocii, quæ cuiq. eſt copia, læti,
Dona ferunt.

Æn. 5. V. 200.

Il eſt étonnant, que nul des interpretes n'ait apperçû le but, qu'a eu le Poëte dans l'epiſode de l'apothéoſe d'Anchiſe, et dans l'epiſode *des jeux, qu'il fait celebrer à ſon tombeau*. C'eſt Auguſte que Virgile repreſente ici ſous le caractere d'Ænée. Le pieux Auguſte par l'apothéoſe, qu'il fit faire à Jule Ceſar ſon pere; et *par les jeux*, dont il honora le nouveau Dieu, a donné accaſion à Virgile d'inventer ce long événement, *dont il remplit un livre preſque entier*.

On ordonna que tout le peuple ſe trouveroit à des jeux, avec des couronnes de laurier.

Ce qui fut donc un trait de pieté approuvé dans Auguſte eſt mis ici ſur le compte d'Ænée par le Poëte, qui fait ſa cour par cette flatterie, *d'autant plus artificieuſe, qu'elle eſt plus indirect*. Il paroit meme que Virgile a repreſenté en Sicile, pour l'apothéoſe d'Anchiſe, *le meme genre de jeux, qu'on fit à Rome pour celle de Jule*.

Vel ſcena ut verſis diſcedat frontibus, utq.
Purpurea intexti tollant aulæa Britanni.

The choice of inwoven Britons for the ſupport of his veil is well accounted for by them who tell us, that Auguſtus was proud to have a number of thoſe to ſerve about him in the quality of ſlaves.

Apres que Jules Ceſar eut vaincu les Anglois, on les employa au ſervice des theatres. C'etoit eux qui faiſoient rouler les decorations ſur leurs pivots, et qui faiſoient mouvoir les machines.

In foribus pugnam ex auro, ſolidoq. elephanto
Gangaridum faciam victoriſq. arma Quirini, &c.

Here *the covering of the figure is too thin* to hide the literal meaning from the *common?* reader, who ſees that the ſeveral triumphs of Cæſar, here recorded in ſculpture, are thoſe which the Poet hath taken moſt pains to finiſh, and hath occaſionally inſerted in ſeveral places of his poem.

Le nil couvert de vaiſſeaux repreſentera *le combat d'Alexandrie, et l'entiere defaite d'Antoine, et de Cléopatre.*

Addam urbes Aſiæ.

Il veut parler des villes d'Aſie; qu'Auguſte alla châtier, l'année qui preceda la mort de Virgile, au rapport de Dion.

Hitherto we have contemplated the decorations of the ſhrine, i. e. ſuch as bear a more direct and immediate reference to the honor of Cæſar. We are now preſented with a view of the remoter ſurrounding ornaments of the temple. Theſe are the illuſ-

On ne peut guere méconnoître ici l'Énéide, que le Poëte a repreſentée ſous *l'allegorie d'un temple*, qu'il dediera à Auguſte. Les deſcendans d'Aſſaracus en ſont les principaux acteurs: je veux dire Anchiſe, Ænée, et ſon fils Jule. Aſſaracus fut pere de Capis,

trious Trojan chiefs, whoſe ſtory was to furniſh the materials, or more properly to form the body and caſe, as it were, of this auguſt ſtructure.

Stabunt et Parii lapides ſpirantia ſigna,
Aſſaraci proles.

et Capis eut Anchiſe pour fils.

Nothing now remains but for FAME to eterniſe the glories of what the great architect had, at the expence of ſo much art and labour, completed, which is predicted in *the higheſt ſublime of ancient poetry* under the idea of ENVY, whom the Poet perſonaliſes, ſhuddering at the view of ſuch tranſcendent perfection, and taſting beforehand the pains of remedileſs vexation, ſtrongly pictured in the image of the worſt infernal tortures.

Invidia infelix, &c.

L'ENVIE reſtera dans un temple conſacré à Auguſte; non plus pour triompher; mais affligée de voir ſa rage inutile.

Invidia infelix, &c.

C'eſt pour marquer que cet Empereur avoit ſurmonté l'envie de ſes compétiteurs, ou de ſes ennemis, Antoine, Lepidus, Sexte-Pompée, Brutus, Caſſius, &c.

Cæſaris et nomen famâ tot ferre per annos, &c.

Virgile n'outre point la promeſſe qu'il fait. On peut dire que par ſon Ænéide il a rendu le nom d'Auguſte immortel.

That you may not want ſufficient time to form your own judgment with due deliberation, I will leave theſe extracts in your poſſeſſion, reſerving my remarks for the next.

Adieu.

LETTER V.

My dear P.

You have now ſeen the ſimilar paſſages from my two Authors, oppoſed to each other in detached paragraphs. But I muſt deſire you to read the performance of Mr. Hurd, the whole together, as it is drawn out by his able pen. I will ſuppoſe you to have finiſhed this entertaining peruſal: and now let me aſk you, did you, any where, at any time, ſee the efficiency of ſuperior talents diſplayed in a more conſpicuous manner? The looſe notes, ſcattered up and down by the French Annotator, without form or connexion, are carefully collected by this fine writer, ar-

ranged in the apteſt order, and worked up into a regular compoſition, with all the graces of expreſſion and elegance of deſign. So excellent was this ingenious performance thought, at the time when it firſt appeared, that it was very warmly applauded by one,[a] from whoſe deciſion in all matters of taſte, as on every ſubject in the whole circle of arts and ſciences, there lies no appeal. You will eaſily perceive, that I can here mean no other than that wonderful man, in whoſe comprehenſive mind was united with the [b]*ſublime imagination of Longinus the ſevereſt reaſoning of the Stagyrite.*

It is without ſcruple confeſſed, that a great part of the rough materials are to be found in the annotations of Catrou. Superficial readers, who do not attend to, or from their "*ſluggiſh and clouded imagi-*" *nations*" are incapable of diſtinguiſhing, the nicer differences of things, have on this account formed very injurious concluſions, and even gone ſo far as to load the LEARNED CRITIC with the charge of

[f] plagiariſm. Such, we know, was the ungenerous treatment, which the great Founder of the Warburtonian [d] School himſelf more than once [e] experienced; and even a direct [f] diſavowal, accompanied with the moſt ſolemn aſſurances, was found ſcarcely ſufficient to repel the charge.

You will diſcover at firſt glance, how much they, who judge in this illiberal manner, underrate the merits of the LEARNED CRITIC. No man of an enlightened and intelligent mind will heſitate to acknowledge, that to him, and him alone, excluſively belong the happy deſign and ſkilful plan of the piece, the judicious diſpoſition of the parts, with the ſplendid ornaments, thrown in here and there occaſionally, giving luſtre and additional beauty to the whole. It is only for the favored few, whom "[g] *Nature has touched with a ray of that celeſtial fire, which we call true Genius,*" out of ſuch materials to form ſo perfect and beautiful an edifice; which the amateur will never fail

fail to contemplate with the livelieſt emotions of delight and admiration. It were as unreaſonable and unjuſt in this place to accuſe the LEARNED CRITIC of plagiariſm, as to condemn the Architect, who brings the ſtones or marble, which he builds with, from the quarry, for want of taſte and invention.

The doctrine of the LEARNED CRITIC on this ſubject applies very appoſitely to the caſe before us. "[h] If there be rea- "ſon for ſuſpecting any communication "between two different writers, it muſt "be taken from ſomething elſe, beſides "the identity of the ſubject-matter of "ſuch deſcription: as from the number, "or the nature of the circumſtances ſe- "lected for imitation—from the order in "which they are diſpoſed—or the man- "ner in which they are repreſented."

The great volume of Nature lies open to every obſerver. Is it then any wonder? if many of thoſe, who attentively peruſe it, ſhould be ſtricken with, and occaſionally tranſcribe the ſame paſſages. The immortal

immortal works of Homer and Virgil, having deſcended through ſo long a ſeries of ages, are to us, at this day, in a manner coeval with the beginning of things; and may be looked upon in the ſame light, as the everlaſting mountains, or any other magnificent phænomena of Nature. The ſeveral objects, which appear ſpread over them in various forms of grandeur and beauty, on all ſides catching the eye of the ſpectator, are to be accounted as *common ſtock*, *in medio poſita*, or, as the Poet expreſſes it, [1] *publica materies*; which every one has an equal right to appropriate to himſelf; and it becomes, under proper management, *privati juris*—his own.

If therefore the principles, laid down by the LEARNED CRITIC, be allowed to be, as by every competent judge they cannot fail of being, equally juſt as candid, the right of property, which he aſſumes, is inconteſtibly eſtabliſhed. *He ſelected his circumſtances from the common ſtock—the order in which they are diſpoſed—and the manner*

manner in which they are repreſented, are entirely his own.

I will not detain you longer on this pitiful ſpecies of common-place detraction, ſo generally in uſe amongſt *the drudges in the lower walks of literature*, which, from time to time, they are ever throwing, very harmleſsly indeed and ineffectually from their diſtance, on thoſe of a ſuperior order; from whoſe works, however excellent, they derive neither pleaſure nor profit; while they read them only with the feelings of mortified vanity, and the paltry deſire of diſcovering faults. What ſeems to promiſe far better entertainment, I would much rather attend you through thoſe delightful ſcenes, which the charming Author, with whom we are now engaged, is continually opening to your view.

That we may enjoy this truly claſſical entertainment in the greater purity, without interruption, would it not be better to wait for ſome more favorable opportunity, when we may enter upon it with our ſpirits freſh,

freſh, and with no unpleaſant impreſſions on the mind? In the mean time, the character of the LEARNED CRITIC will, I doubt not, ſtand as high in your opinion, as firm and unſhaken by the petty cavils of envious detractors, as it does in mine.

Adieu.

LETTER VI.

My dear P.

Do I not flatter myſelf, rather too much? when I ſuppoſe you have been waiting, with ſome degree of impatience, for the entertainment which I promiſed you. I will not pretend to gueſs what expectations you may have formed. Whatever they may be, as I have only a ſecondary part to act, in ſubſerviency to the Maſter of the Feaſt, I may be allowed to hope, that you will not be entirely diſappointed.

On your firſt entrance into this enchanted ground, you will not fail to admire the extraordinary ſagacity diſplayed by the LEARNED CRITIC in his development of the gradual preparation, with which

which the Poet guards the approach to his intended temple, " under the imagery " of an ancient triumph, when all the " Grecian Muſes at once, after being " forced from their high and advan- " tageous ſituation on the ſummit of the " Aonian Mount, were to be led captive " into Italy."

With the ſame conſummate ſkill he conducts his reader through the ſeveral parts of this auguſt ſtructure after its erection. Virgil ſays ſimply, that he will rear a temple of marble.

" Et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam."

Virgil, conſiſtently with that exquiſite taſte and wonderful judgment, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſh all his works, could do no more. He was to exhibit a temple before thoſe, who were familiarly acquainted with its uſual form and ſtructure. Here therefore a minute deſcription of its various parts would have been tedious and impertinent. The French Annotator takes it up as he finds it in the poem. But the caſe of the Commentator is far different

different from that of the Poet. The LEARNED CRITIC was aware of this difference, and better acquainted with his buſineſs. He well knew that "the ima-"gery in this place could not be under-"ſtood, without reflecting on the cuſ-"tomary form and diſpoſition of the "Pagan temples," which therefore he accurately and ſcientifically deſcribes, with all the knowledge and ability of a profeſſed artiſt.

"The ſhrine or ſanctuary in the centre, "wherein the ſtatue of the preſiding god "was placed."

In medio mihi Cæſar erit.

"The altar before the ſhrine," on which were to be offered the ſacrifices to the new divinity.

——— Cæſoſq. videre juvencos.

"The doors of curious carved work, "incloſing the image, and ductile veils, "embelliſhed by the rich embroidery of "flowers, animals, or human figures."

Purpurea intexti tollant aulæa Britanni.

Thus

Thus we have a comprehenſive view of this poetical building; of which the French Annotator ſeems to have had no idea; or, if he had any, not to have been aware, how intimately the plan, here given of it, was connected with the Poet's deſign.

With this chart in his hand, the curious enquirer traces the whole progreſs of the Poet's imagery with eaſe and certainty. But this was not all. It was not enough to proceed regularly, ſtep by ſtep, through the ſeveral ſtages of this viſionary ſcenery. It was evident that by theſe typical ſigns more was ſignified than what was directly expreſſed. The LEARNED CRITIC apprehends at once this remoter ſenſe, and by an explication the moſt eaſy and intelligible, renders it obvious to the meaneſt underſtanding. The *commoneſt* reader now ſees that under the expreſſion, *ſolennes pompas*, the Poet intimated the gradual *ſolemn* preparation of poetic pomp, in which he would proceed to the celebration of Cæſar's praiſe.

That

That by the ſacrifices performed on the altar, *cæſos juvencos*, were prefigured the moſt grateful offerings to his Divinity, in the occaſional epiſodes, which he would conſecrate to his more immediate honor. And finally, that in the embroidered veils was adumbrated the richeſt texture of *his* fancy, intended for a covering to that admired image of *his* virtues, which was to make the pride and glory of *his* poem. What ſpirit and animation does this beautiful paſſage aſſume! how much more impreſſive and intereſting does it become! illuſtrated by this luminous interpretation.

His revered friend and patron (Dr. Warburton) whom the LEARNED CRITIC declares himſelf, at all times, "ambitious of imitating, dealt much, throughout all his writings, in theſe double ſenſes and allegories; which he had a wonderful faculty of diſcovering, and a manner of explaining peculiar to himſelf. The ſame favorite Poet, to whom the LEARNED CRITIC has done ſo much honor, afforded him

alſo an occaſion for the exerciſe of his uncommon powers. The allegorical interpretation of the ſixth book of the Æneis has been much celebrated, and cauſed no ſmall diſquiſition amongſt the Literati. There are not wanted many, who have thought it a great improvement on the plain and obvious ſenſe of Virgil. I am not aſhamed to confeſs myſelf of the number. This extraordinary performance became more the ſubject of curioſity and converſation after the [b] *temperate and chaſte praiſe* beſtowed upon it by the late Dr. Jortin. The juſt [c] tribute, thus paid in the ſpirit of truth and ſincerity, by that excellent perſon and accompliſhed ſcholar to a *learned friend*, though [d] received by that friend himſelf with thanks and approbation, was afterwards ſo miſchievouſly miſrepreſented by the [e] "baſe "and malignant" perverſions of an anonymous [f] pamphleteer, as to become unfortunately a cauſe of offence, with ſo fatal an operation, as to make an irreparable breach in the union, which had long ſubſiſted with

reciprocal

reciprocal honor and advantage between theſe two eminent men. When I ſay *reciprocal* honor and advantage, I have not overlooked the taunting ſneers of the anonymous pamphleteer. Whatever he, or any other of Warburton's flattering admirers, may be pleaſed to ſay, *it will*, I believe, *be very clear to other people which was the* [g] *gainer by this* friendly *intercourſe*. Your friend, at leaſt, who is now writing to you, can be under no doubt, having by him at this moment a [h] ſeries of letters from Dr. Warburton to Dr. Jortin, in which he is repeatedly expreſſing his thanks for literary ſervices received from Dr. Jortin, with many grateful acknowledgements of obligation.

You will not be ſorry to quit this painful and offenſive ſubject, and to return with me to the more pleaſing pages of the LEARNED CRITIC. The ſculptured ornaments on the doors of the ſhrine, and the remoter decorations ſurrounding the temple, are explained by him, with little or no variation, ſave what ariſes from his

ſuperior elegance of manner, as Catrou and other Commentators explain them; with the exception of one ſtriking image, which finiſhes the whole; and, ſeen in the new light thrown over it by the LEARNED CRITIC, far ſurpaſſes all the reſt in grandeur of conception and deep-thought artifice of deſign.

> Invidia infelix Furias amnemque ſeverum
> Cocyti metuet, tortoſque Ixionis angues,
> Immanemque rotam, et non exſuperabile ſaxum.

Did you ever ſuſpect? that in the figure, which you ſee here ſo finely drawn, of ENVY, you were beholding a great performance executed by the hand of FAME, engaged in one of her moſt honorable offices, that of *eternizing* the works of an illuſtrious Poet. Did it ever occur to you? that under this bold imagery Virgil was predicting, "*in the higheſt* "*ſublime of ancient poetry*," the immortality of his projected poem. Not one amongſt the numerous tribe of ancient Scholiaſts,

Scholiaſts, nor any other of the modern Commentators, ſcarcely leſs numerous, have dropt the moſt diſtant intimation to this purpoſe. F. Catrou is left far behind. When he contemplated this ideal edifice, he certainly did, ſome how or other, chance to diſcover in it, what no other had diſcovered before; but, in the emblematical figures wrought round it, does not appear to have ſeen more, than what any common ſpectator may be ſuppoſed to have obſerved. In this laſt particularly, he tells us, are repreſented the triumphs of Auguſtus over his competitors.

Invidia infeſix ———.

C'eſt pour marquer que cet Empereur avoit ſurmonté l'Envie de ces competiteurs ou des ennemis Antoine, Lepidus, Sexte Pompée, Brutus, Caſſius, &c.

It was reſerved for the great Myſtagogue, the LEARNED CRITIC alone, to pierce through the obſcurity, which hung

over this myſterious part of the Poet's mechaniſm, and to catch his more concealed meaning; which he expounds in a manner ſurpriſingly clear and ſatisfactory. Such are the ſtrokes, which [i] diſtinguiſh one man from another, and decidedly mark the character of a great Genius. You will think, perhaps, that I engaged in a perilous enterpriſe, when I undertook to criticize the works of a writer, who has ſo indiſputable a claim to that exalted character. I am fully aware of the danger, which I encountered. Whatever may have been my ſucceſs, it will be found, I hope, that I have conducted myſelf "[k] with all that regard, "*that* is due from one ſcholar to an- "other," or rather with all that reſpect and deference, *which* are due from all other ſcholars to one of ſuch acknowledged pre-eminence.

Shall I confeſs the real truth? I actually propoſed to myſelf the applauded critique, which we have been conſidering, as a model,

a model, which I was ambitious of copying. Whether I have caught any trait of this great master's manner, it is now with you to determine.

Adieu.

LETTER VII.

My dear P.

By the ſlight ſketch which I have ventured to draw out, of Mr. Hurd's admired critique on one of the nobleſt fictions of Antiquity, I am inclined to think that you are already prepared to concurr with the reverend [a] Encomiaſt in the judgment, which, with his accuſtomed candor and liberality, he paſſed upon it. If you ſhould have any heſitation, there are other maſterly ſtrokes of exquiſite ſkill and management interſperſed through different parts of the work, well worthy your attention.

The

The extraordinary delicacy, which the LEARNED CRITIC has ſhewn on this occaſion, and the reſpect, which, ſo conſiſtently with his uſual practice, he has paid to his readers, will not have eſcaped your notice. [b] The "imagery," he ſays, "in this place cannot be underſtood "without reflecting on the cuſtomary "form and diſpoſition of the Pagan "Temples," &c. intimating that *reflexion* only was wanted, and ſuppoſing all the requiſite knowledge to have been previouſly acquired. When Mr. Gray firſt publiſhed his two Pindaric Odes, "he "was [c] adviſed even by his friends to "ſubjoin ſome few explanatory notes; "but had too much reſpect for the under-"ſtanding of his readers to take that li-"berty." It was afterwards found that Mr. Gray had much over-rated the underſtanding of his readers, and the explanatory notes were added. In the ſame manner, I believe, you will think with me, that not a few of the LEARNED CRITIC's readers will be under obligation to him

him for the information, which he has had the foreſight and the goodneſs ſo liberally to impart.

It has been obſerved, that no one is qualified to undertake the arduous taſk of criticiſing any literary work, who does not in ſome meaſure participate of the ſame fire and genius, as animated the author. Every competent and unprejudiced judge will at once acknowledge with what juſtice the LEARNED CRITIC aſſerts his claim to the high office, which he aſſumes. He diſcovers throughout, by various ſymptoms, how ſenſibly he ſympathiſes with the Poet in all his feelings: he pierces with his intellectual eye into the innermoſt receſſes of the Poet's mind; he conceives, as it were by the ſame inſpiration, all the brilliant thoughts, the ſublime ideas, and rapturous viſions, which the Muſe ever preſented, even in her fondeſt moments, to her favorite votary. He comprehends his whole plan, which he traces through the ſucceſſive ſtages of its progreſs, from its firſt conception to its final

final perfection: not only catches the bolder features of the Poet's deſign, but is alſo intimately acquainted with all the nicer touches of his art and management.

This perfect underſtanding, which the LEARNED CRITIC every where diſcovers of the Poet's wonderful art and management, is the more worthy of remark, and reflects the greater luſtre on his character, as "*not being*[d] *apprehended by other Critics;*" who by their ignorance of an excellency ſo peculiarly belonging to Virgil, were betrayed, "*even the beſt of them,*" it ſeems, into a very erroneous eſtimate of his tranſcendent merits.

It would take up more of your time, than I have the aſſurance to aſk, were I to analyſe every part of this elaborate performance; and to ſay all which occurs to me on its ſeveral excellencies and beauties. Nor will it be neceſſary. You will be able to ſee, and to judge of them much better by your own peruſal. At the ſame time, when you conſider the reſpectable

reſpectable character of the writer, you will not wonder, if I have been rather minute in my obſervations. Whatever falls from ſuch high authority cannot but make a very deep impreſſion, and demands the moſt ſerious attention. I have alſo been the more ſtudious of ſetting forth in its true colors and juſt proportions this perfect model of the imitative ſtyle for the benefit of ſucceeding adventurers in this hazardous mode of compoſition; which *ſeems hitherto to have been ſo little underſtood.*

In doing this I beg you to obſerve, that I am co-operating, in his general deſign, with the LEARNED CRITIC; who declares that "one of the chief reaſons, "which induced him to diſcloſe thus "much of one of the nobleſt fictions of "Antiquity was, that the propriety of "allegorical compoſition, which made "the diſtinguiſhing ornament of ancient "poetry, ſeem'd *ſo little known or ſo little attended to* by the modern profeſ-"ſors of this fine art."

In

In conformity to the ſame deſign I cannot forbear to add a remark or two more. It ſeems, as has been before intimated, the great art of the Imitator, ſo to conduct his imitation, as to make what he copies appear his own; in which the wonderful addreſs of the LEARNED CRITIC is very conſpicuous. Beſides the labor'd conſtruction of the whole piece, wrought up, as you ſee, to the very acme of perfection, there are many little hints, thrown in here and there, careleſsly as it were, and by accident, which inſenſibly lead the reader to admire the author's uncommon powers of invention and original thinking, rather than to ſuſpect him of "taking any thing to himſelf, that be"longed to another."

By the ſame indirect means of artful inſinuation, and by different expreſſions, apparently caſual, is gradually brought into notice that dignified ſuperiority, which the LEARNED CRITIC ſo ably ſupports over the common herd of *ordinary writers, mere verbal Critics, Nibblers of old books,*

books, word-catchers, who live upon ſyllables, &c. &c. This nice art, by which the adept is thus qualified, under cover, to elevate his own merits, ſeems to be amongſt the *eſoteric doctrines* of the Warburtonian School, revealed only to the initiated into the higher myſteries.

F. Catrou was not of the number. He explained one of the nobleſt allegories in ancient poetry with great ſimplicity, not appearing to be ſenſible that his explication had in it any thing extraordinary, or ſhewed any uncommon ſagacity. So little attentive was he to that manly vindication of character, which men of letters ought never to loſe ſight of, that, though he was the firſt formally to notice in this beautiful paſſage of Virgil the veſtiges of a noble allegory, and diſcovered, confeſſedly before any other, the Æneis prefigured under the image of a magnificent temple, which the Poet declared his intention of erecting; yet he gave his diſcovery to the public, even in its prime of novelty, without claiming to himſelf any

peculiar merit. Having no view beyond that of explaining his author, he has no where interwoven with his remarks on the Poet, as we have ſeen a more ſkilful writer do with ſo much art and effect, a fine-wrought panegyric on his own performance. The plodding note-writer had no knowledge of thoſe refined artifices, ſo much in practice amongſt the Initiated, by which they contrived to throw all thoſe, not within the pale of their own community, to a remote diſtance, far below that proud eminence, which they themſelves, for ſo long a period, ſo honorably, and with ſuch commanding authority maintained. He, poor ſimple man! never ſo much as once hinted at the dullneſs,—the ſtupidity,—the ignorance of other Commentators, which the LEARNED CRITIC finds ſo frequent occaſion to deplore.

When you conſider the great delicacy of this nice art, and its utility to a writer, emulous as all writers are, or ſhould be, of fame and diſtinction, you will not, I hope,

hope, think that I have ſpent too many words in pointing out and unfolding the maſterly uſe, which the LEARNED CRITIC has made of it.

I had thoughts of giving a body of Canons, drawn out in form, for the benefit of young ſtudents in this elegant branch of literature, and of illuſtrating them by examples, ſelected from the writings of the LEARNED CRITIC. But having already ſo long engaged your attention, I ſuſpect that you will not be ſorry to hail the accuſtomed

Adieu.

LETTER VIII.

My dear P.

I thought that I had taken leave, in due form, of the learned critic and the French Annotator; but our friend S. who is, you know, one of the moſt zealous amongſt the numerous admirers of the former, on peruſing what I had written, (which he has the courteſy to ſay he always wiſhes to do), declares, that I have been guilty of great injuſtice towards his favorite author, in ſuppoſing, as I certainly have done, that he had

ſeen the annotations of F. Catrou, when he wrote his admired critique. This our friend takes upon him abſolutely to deny, in the moſt peremptory terms, on proof, as he alleges, incontrovertible.

The LEARNED CRITIC had ſuch a rich vein of original thought, and poſſeſſed within himſelf ſuch inexhauſtible ſtores, as never to be under the neceſſity, or even temptation, of wandering, in ſearch of matter, beyond the confines of his own mind. If, in the courſe of his extenſive reading, he might now and then catch a ſentiment or reflexion, falling in perchance with the ſubject on which he was at any time treating, it is impoſſible, our friend ſays, that one of *his* [a] known candor, and ingenuous openneſs of temper—*his* [b] delicacy of honor, in not aſſuming to himſelf, or depreſſing the merits of others—a point, in which, after the [c] example ſet forth ſo conſpicuouſly by his revered Friend and Patron, he was always particularly

cularly nice—of *his* high ſenſe of literary dignity, which he never failed, on a proper occaſion, to aſſert, with equal ability as zeal—it is impoſſible that, with this temper, and theſe feelings, he ſhould ſuppreſs the name of an author, to whom, if he really had ſeen his works, it cannot be denied, that he was under more than common obligation.

Now it is notorious that the LEARNED CRITIC no where acknowledges any ſuch obligation, which, in the caſe ſuppoſed, our friend ſays poſitively, he would certainly have made a point of doing, not without adding, in his elegant manner, ſome expreſſion of compliment and reſpect for an author, whoſe thoughts were ſo congenial with his own. So far from making any conceſſion to this effect, he very plainly inſinuates, you will obſerve, by frequent intimations, the purport of which cannot be miſunderſtood, that the whole doctrine of the ALLEGORY, as well

as the development of the Poet's wonderful art and management, was entirely *new*; what no other critic had ever thought of before; or, as he generally repreſents thoſe, who preceded him in the ſame track, had the diſcernment to apprehend, the judgment to approve, or the taſte to feel and to admire.

What adds great weight to this opinion, it appears beyond all queſtion that the [d] great man, who ſo warmly applauded this extraordinary performance on its firſt appearance, had not the moſt diſtant notion, that there had ever been any former critic or commentator, who could diſpute the honor with his reſpected friend.

I do not ſeem at preſent to have any thing in my mind which may be urged, as ſatisfactory, in reply to thoſe arguments; nor do I much regret the want. I am more diſpoſed to concur with our ingenious friend in his liberal ſentiments, than

than to controvert what he ſo ably and zealouſly maintains.

I am alſo the more inclined to this party, when I conſider the paſſage, on which this applauded critique was written. I feel no heſitation in allowing to the LEARNED CRITIC the whole merit of explaining, as we have ſeen, theſe introductory lines to the third Georgic, without any aſſiſtence from F. Catrou, or other commentators. Indeed it has long been rather a matter of ſurpriſe with me, that a meaning ſo obvious, as this now appears, ſhould have lain ſo long concealed; and that the diſcovery, firſt made by Catrou, and afterwards by the LEARNED CRITIC, had not been made many centuries before either the one or the other was born.

It is evident that Virgil did not mean to erect a real temple of marble; or actually to make ſuch a ſolemn proceſſion, as he deſcribes; or to offer ſuch coſtly ſacrifices, as he ſpeaks of, to his new Divinity. It is equally evident that he did

mean ſomething. Now it is a very natural queſtion for every ſcholar to aſk, what this covert meaning might be. The Poet ſeems himſelf to have pointed it out in terms ſufficiently clear and intelligible. After having diſclaimed the trite and hacknied themes of the Grecian Poets, he profeſſes that he alſo muſt make an attempt to raiſe himſelf into reputation and celebrity by ſome work, which, in ſublimity of conception, magnificence of deſign, and above all by the exalted dignity of the ſubject, ſhould far ſurpaſs them all, and give him a decided ſuperiority and triumph over thoſe haughty predeceſſors,

——— tantanda via eſt, quâ me quoque poſſim
Tollere humo, VICTORque virûm volitare per ora.

It is plain that this work, however ſuperior in degree, muſt be of the ſame kind with thoſe before alluded to. Old Servius, notwithſtanding the ſcoffs and ſneers illiberally caſt upon him by ſome writers, who condeſcend nevertheleſs,

without ſcruple, to avail themſelves of his learning and ingenuity, wanted, as a critic, neither ſagacity nor ability. What he obſerves on the words before us is very judicious; and furniſhes a clue, which leads to the full diſcovery of the Poet's deſign.

——— quâ *me* quoque poſſim
Tollere humo.———
Sicut *alii ſe ſuſtulerunt* CARMINIS merito.

SERVIUS.

Under any other ſuppoſition, the recognition of theſe fables in this place would have been impertinent, and have anſwered no purpoſe whatſoever. You will readily agree with me that to write thus without meaning is not quite in Virgil's manner. The work, therefore, which he meditated, could be no other than a projected poem. This appears to have been the great plan of the Æneis; which he prefigures, as he proceeds, under the idea of a temple, with all its ſplendid decorations, as has been deſcribed at large in the elaborate

commentary, which you have been reading.

With what aptitude and propriety this divine work was repreſented, throughout all its parts, under the imagery, thus happily fancied, and ſkilfully conducted by the Poet, the two writers, with whom we have been ſo long engaged, have, each in his own way, very clearly and ſatisfactorily made out, the one by his learned and laborious notes, the other in his elegant and finely-written eſſay. After what has paſſed, does it not appear rather unaccountable that a meaning, ſhaded only by a veil of ſo tranſparent a texture, ſhould ſo long have eſcaped the notice, even of the moſt *ordinary* reader.

I rely with confidence on your candor, that you will not ſuppoſe, when I conſider this explication of Virgil, given by Catrou and the LEARNED CRITIC, as no very marvellous diſcovery, as an atchievement of no ſuch extraordinary difficulty, that I mean to depreciate their reſpective merits. The apparent eaſe which oftentimes

times accompanies a work of genius, and ſeems not rarely to mark the character of a new diſcovery, ſo ſoon as it is made, ſo far from diminiſhing the value of either, is in fact their greateſt recommendation; confirming in the moſt ſatisfactory manner the excellency of the one, and the certainty of the other, and raiſing in proportion the reputation of the author.

—— ut ſibi quivis
Speret idem; ſudet multum fruſtraque laboret
Auſus idem.——

Hor. Art. Poet, v. 240.

Adieu.

LETTER IX.

My dear P.

On looking back over theſe papers, as they are now arranged in a connected ſeries, it has occurred to me that there would be a propriety in adjoining the paſſage from Pope's tranſlation of Homer, alluded to in the firſt letter. It is therefore here given, accompanied with the remarks, as it ſtands in the European Magazine, December 1799.

The paſſage is in the laſt book of the Iliad, where Iris is repreſented as plunging from the ſky into the ſea.

Ως εφατ'. Ωρτο δε Ιρις, αελλοπος, αγγελεουσα,
Μεσσηγυς δε Σαμυ τε και Ιμβρυ παιπαλοεσσης
Ενθορε μειλανι ποντῳ, επεςοναχησε δε λιμνη.

You

You ſhall have the tranſlation firſt from Pope's *old friend*; which, though, perhaps, not ornamented with much elegance, or dignified with any great ſublimity of expreſſion, is, however, agreeably to the firſt principle of tranſlation, laid down in the ingenious [a] Eſſay, to which we have often referred, "a more complete tranſcript of the ideas of the original work."

Iris, this ſaid, ſwift down the meſſage bore,
And betwixt Samos and rough Imbrus ſhore,
Leaps in the main, divided waves reſound. OGILBY.

Do you wiſh to ſee it ſet off with more embelliſhment of language? Cowper has ſucceeded very happily in his verſion; preſerving, with correſpondent diction, the true ſenſe and ſpirit of his author:

——"Then Iris, tempeſt-wing'd, aroſe,
"Samos between and Imbrus rock begirt,
"She plung'd into the gloomy flood."—

Here, as in Homer, the deſcent of Iris is inſtantaneous. Nothing perceptible intervenes

tervenes between her firſt riſing up at the command of Jupiter, and plunging into the ſea.

Has not the great maſter been ſtudious to mark this precipitation in the text by the ſtructure of his verſe? I am aware that I am now treading on tender ground. The ſimilitude, repeatedly aſſerted, between ſenſe and ſound, the cadence of a verſe and the ſentiment or image conveyed by the words, is no doubt often fanciful. Yet, ſome how or other, I ſeem to feel a ſort of ſubitaneous effect expreſſed in this disjointed hemiſtich:

Ενθορε | μειλανι | ποντω——

Inſtead of which, ſuppoſe it to be written

Ενθορεν ατρυγετω ποντω

or thus,

Ενθορε μεν πολιω ποντω

would the effect then be equally ſtriking?

Whether

Whether you feel with me this imputed reſemblance or not, you will have no ſcruple in allowing that the images conveyed by the language of Homer are of an aſpect far different from the *ſmooth, eaſy, gradual proceſſion*, deſcribed in one of the couplets, which appears with ſuch dazzling brilliancy in Pope's tranſlation.

" He added not, and Iris, from the ſkies,
" Swift as a whirlwind, on the meſſage flies:
" *Meteorous the face of Ocean ſweeps,*
" *Refulgent gliding o'er the ſable deeps:*
" Between where Samos wide his foreſts ſpreads,
" And rocky Imbrus lifts its pointed heads,
" Down plung'd the maid: the parted waves reſound."

So far from *gliding* over the ſurface of the ocean, the Goddeſs, you ſee, is repreſented as plunging in at once, with ſuch violence that the waters are ſaid to have reſounded on her immerſion, at a particular ſpot, marked out with ſcrupulous exactneſs, to which the whole of the action is confined.

What makes this interpolation the more extraordinary, you will obſerve the ſenſe of

of Homer is rendered full and complete, without any ſuch foreign aid:

——Ωρτο δε Ιρις αελλοπος, αγγελεουσα,
Μεσσηγυς δε Σαμου τε και Ιμβρου παιπαλοεσσης
Ενθορε μειλανι ποντω.

——" Iris, from the ſkies,
" Swift as a whirlwind, on the meſſage flies.
" Between where Samos wide his foreſts ſpreads,
" And rocky Imbrus lifts its pointed heads,
" Down plung'd the maid."

Does not this plunging down with *ſo eaſy and gliding* a motion, remind you of another rather whimſical deſcription? where Hector *runs* away with the challenge from his brother *immediately*, with ſteps—*majeſtically ſlow*.

Where then did Pope pick up theſe extraneous ornaments? purpureos pannos? as little affording with his own expreſſions, as with the Greek text. The truth is, he was ſeduced by the faſcinating charms of our own immortal poet; and borrowed both the imagery and the expreſſion from that fine paſſage in the

P. L. where Milton deſcribes the deſcent of the angelic train:

——" And from the other hill
" To their firſt ſtation, all in *bright* array,
" The Cherubim deſcended, on the ground
" *Gliding meteorous*, as evening miſt,
" Riſen from a river, o'er the mariſh *glides*,
" And gathers ground faſt on the laborers heel
" Homeward returning." B. xii. 626.

Here we diſcover whence Pope caught his idea of *meteorous*, his *refulgence* and *gliding* motion; which appear with ſo much beauty, as arranged by the hand of a maſter; though ſufficiently awkward, it muſt be confeſſed, and incongruous, as united by the copyiſt in a ſubject, to which they bear no proper relation.

You will by no means wonder that Pope ſhould have been ſo much delighted with theſe charming lines of Milton. His zealous admirers have, I think, to regret that he did not exert more of his *wonderful judgment* in chooſing a proper place, in which to inſert theſe adventitious beauties. Do you not recollect any

any paſſage? where they might have been attached to the text of Homer, with leſs violence to his meaning, and form of compoſition. What think you of that in the firſt book? where Thetis is repreſented as riſing from the ſea, ηυτ' ΟΜΙΧΛΗ.

Καρπαλιμως δ' ανεδυ πολιης ἁλος, ηυτ' ΟΜΙΧΛΗ. Il. i. 359.

And like a *miſt* ſhe roſe above the tide.

From the idea here ſtarted, we ſhould have been leſs ſurpriſed to find Pope indulging himſelf in theſe amuſing excurſions; and wandering a little out of his way, to catch at objects, hanging ſo alluringly in his view. The imagery of Milton would in this place have harmonized with that of Homer; and been conſidered probably as an additional beauty.

" And like a *miſt*, ſhe riſes 'bove the tide,
" *Meteorous* the face of ocean ſweeps,
" *Refulgent gliding* o'er the ſable deeps."

You

You will be pleaſed, I know, with this admirable couplet, ſeen, thus connected, to far greater advantage, than where Pope, with no very *wonderful judgment* ſurely, placed it. May I not claim ſome merit with you for having removed it to a ſituation, ſo much better ſuited for its reception? I leave this to your conſideration.

Adieu.

LETTER X.

My dear P.

I must beg leave to break in upon your leiſure once more, with a paper, printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, July 1793, which you will think, perhaps, not ſo immediately connected with the preceding; bearing however ſo much relation to the ſubject therein diſcuſſed, eſpecially in the concluding paragraph, which carries with it an apparent imitation of the LEARNED CRITIC from an old ſcholiaſt, that it will not, I truſt, be deemed an impertinent intruſion, if it have a place in the preſent volume.

——"Sume ſuperbiam
Quæſitam meritis."

It is univerſally conſidered, ſays an ancient Moraliſt, as illiberal and offenſive, for

for a man to ſpeak of his own abilities and importance before others. Whatever powers or excellence he may be conſcious that he poſſeſſes, he loſes the whole grace of them, when he becomes his own panegyriſt; at leaſt if he ſtands forth on this dangerous ground without ſome artful diſguiſe. This elegant ſentiment is expreſſed in a diſſertation profeſſedly written on the ſubject of ſelf-praiſe; wherein the author has given rules for the regulation of this nice and delicate art; and has quoted many examples of great men, who have, on particular occaſions, practiſed it without offence. But it is only in very peculiar circumſtances, and under many reſtrictions, that this ſeducing gratification can be ſafely indulged. It is noted therefore as a very diſguſting practice in Euripides, that he ſo frequently interweaves in the action of the drama the mention of himſelf, when irrelative to the ſubject.

But the poets, from their birth, ſeem, by the general courteſy of mankind, to be exempted from common rules; and are

allowed to ſtart occaſionally from the dull path of decorum, which the greater part of mankind are contented, and hold it prudent, to keep. Thus the divine Pindar, who is acknowledged to be the firſt of this privileged order, though he declare [b] *vain boaſting to be nearly in uniſon with madneſs*, is yet very frequent in magnifying his own powers, and ſpeaking contemptuouſly of his rivals: whom he conſiders merely as *crows* or *chattering daws*, while he compares himſelf to the ſoaring *eagle*:

Σοφος ὁ πολ-
λα εἰδως φυᾳ·
Μαθοντες δε, λαβροι
Παγλωσσιᾳ, ΚΟΡΑΚΕΣ ὡς,
Ακρανταᾳ [c] γαρυεμεν
ΔΙΟΣ προς ΟΡΝΙΘΑ Θειον. Ol. ii. 154.

He only, in whoſe ample breaſt
Nature hath true inherent genius pour'd,
The praiſe of wiſdom may conteſt:
Not they, who, with loquacious learning ſtor'd,
Like *crows* and chattering *jays*, with clamourous cries
Purſue the *bird of Jove*, that ſails along the ſkies. West.

So

So again:

Εσ∫ι δ' ΑΙΕ-
ΤΟΣ ωκυς εν [d] πε∫ανοις,
Ος ελαβεν αι·ψα τη-
λοθε με∫αμαιομενος
Δαφοιναν αγραν πασιν·
Κραγε∫αι δε ΚΟ-
ΔΟΙΟΙ ταπεινα νεμου∫αι. N. iii. 138.

Swift 'mongſt the feather'd race the *eagle* flies,
And, darting through the vaſt profound,
Sagacious of his quarry, wings his way;
And gripes with ſudden graſp the diſtant prey:
While crows of humbler flight, and chattering pies,
Pick their vile food along the ground.

So alſo again:

Μακρα μοι
Δ' αυ∫οθεν α·λμαθ' υποσκα-
πτοι τις; εχω γονα∫ων ελαφραν ορμαν.
Και περαν πον∫οιο παλλον-
τ' ΑΙΕΤΟΙ. N. v. 36.

Hence cut me wide a trench: with vigor light,
My active limbs the chaſm o'erleap.
Beyond the confines of the deep
The tow'ring *eagles* wing their rapid flight.

It is therefore with peculiar propriety that our own great Lyric Bard calls Pindar, in harmony with his own ideas thus in triumphant exultation repeatedly expreſſed, the Theban *eagle*; which is more characteriſtic than the *ſwan* of Horace: though Pope appears to have preferred the latter, and has emblematically yoked four to the car in which Pindar is ſeated; alluding, the incomparable editor of his works tells us, "to the chariot races, he "celebrated in the Grecian games."

Of Horace it may be obſerved, that, amongſt his other imitations of Pindar, he has not ſpared to follow his example in this hazardous practice. In immediate compariſon with his great original he ſpeaks indeed of himſelf with equal modeſty as elegance:

> Multa Dircæum levat aura *cygnum*,
> Tendit, Antoni, quoties in altos
> Nubium tractus. Ego, apis Matinæ
> More, modoque,
> Grata carpentis thyma, per laborem
> Plurimum, circa nemus, uvidique
> Tiburis ripas, operoſa parvus
> Carmina fingo. Carm. L. iii. O. 2.

Which

Which Mr. Gray, in the paſſage alluded to above, has beautifully imitated; or rather *(as was his way whenever he imitated)* far ſurpaſſed. About to ſpeak of himſelf, he addreſſes his Lyre in this animated apoſtrophe:

> O! Lyre divine, what daring ſpirit
> Wakes thee now? though he inherit
> Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
> That the Theban *eagle* bear,
> Sailing with ſupreme dominion
> Through the azure deep of air;
> Yet———

Here he quits his original; thinking, perhaps, the image of a little inſect, contraſted with the ſoaring eagle, as too trifling, and inconſonant to this, the ſublimeſt, order of Poetry.

But, notwithſtanding the apparent modeſty of Horace in the preſence of his maſter, at other times we find him much leſs reſerved. The laſt ode of the ſecond, and the laſt of the third book, are profeſſedly dedicated to his own praiſes. In the one he appears ſoaring with the ſame daring flight, as he deſcribes Pindar himſelf,

ſelf, under the ſame poetical metamorphoſe:

Non uſitatâ, nec tenui ferar
Pennâ biformis per liquidum æthera
Vates; neque in terris morabor
Longius——— Carm. ii. O. xx.

In the other he exultingly predicts his own immortality, and the eternity of his works:

Exegi monumentum ære perennius, &c.

Ovid concludes his great work with the ſame aſſured anticipation of future celebrity:

Jamque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetuſtas, &c.

And in ſeveral other places we obſerve him dwelling with fond complacency on the importance of his poetical character.

Thus it appears that the practice of celebrating their own praiſes is very general amongſt the votaries of the Muſes. But theſe effuſions of ſelf-approbation, though very open and undiſguiſed, are yet temperate and chaſtiſed, when compared to the extravagant preſumption of the earlier Roman writers.

In

In the entertaining Miſcellany of A. Gellius are preſerved three curious epitaphs upon three ancient dramatiſts, ſuppoſed to have been written, each ſeverally, by the dramatiſts themſelves:

Epigramma Nævii,
plenum ſuperbiæ Campanæ.

Mortales immortales flere ſi foret fas,
Flerent Divæ Camœnæ Nævium poetam.
Itaque poſtquam eſt orcino traditus theſauro,
Oblitei ſunt Romæ loquier latinâ linguâ.

Plauti.

Poſtquam morte datu' 'ſt Plautus, Comœdia luget.
Scena eſt deſerta, dein Riſus, Ludu' Jocuſque,
Et numeri innumeri ſimul omnes conlachrymarunt.

Pacuvii,
verecundiſſimum & puriſſimum.

Adoleſcens, tametetſi properas, hoc te ſaxum rogat
Utei ad ſe aſpicias; deinde, quod ſcriptu' 'ſt, legas.
Hic ſunt poetæ, Marcci Pacuviei ſita
Oſſa. Hoc volebam neſcius ne eſſes: vale

L. 1. Cap. xxiv.

The amiable modeſty of the laſt appears to great advantage, when contraſted with the inflated arrogance of the two preceding. Nor are there wanted inſtances amongſt other poets, where the well-earned pride of Horace is aſſumed with the greateſt delicacy, and moſt artful

ful management. Amongſt theſe the firſt, which claims our attention, is from the great father of poetry himſelf. The fourth book of the Iliad concludes with the following lines:

Ενθα κεν ουκετι εργον ανηρ ονοσαιτο μετελθων,
Ὁστις ετ' αβληθος κ᾽ ανετραπος οξει χαλκω,
Δινευοι καθα μεσσον, αγοι δε ἑ Παλλας Αθηνη,
Χειρος ελασσ', αυταρ βελεων καθερυκοι ερωην.
Πολλοι γαρ Τρωων κ᾽ Αχαιων ἡμαθι κεινω
Πρηνεες εν κονιησι παρ᾽ αλληλοισι τετανυο.

Had ſome brave chief this martial ſcene beheld,
By Pallas guarded through the dreadful field;
Might darts be bid to turn their points away,
And ſwords around him innocently play:
The war's whole art with wonder he had ſeen,
And counted heroes, where he counted men.
So fought each hoſt, with thirſt of glory fir'd,
And crouds on crouds triumphantly expir'd. Pope.

If any one unacquainted with the Greek language ſhould happen to read this paſſage, as it appears in the tranſlation, he may, perhaps, be at a loſs to diſcover how in any degree it applies to the purpoſe, for which it is here adduced. The leading idea, contained in the words εργον ΟΝΟ-

ΣΑΣΑΙ,

ΣΑΣΘΑΙ, with which we are immediately concerned, and which, indeed, is the principal idea intended to be impreſſed, is ſo faintly transfuſed, or rather ſo much obſcured by the introduction of quaint conceits and prettineſſes, that the ſentence, as it now ſtands, will ſcarcely ſupport the obſervations, which are meant to be built upon it.

Nor is this, though at preſent the moſt material, the only defect in the rendering of theſe beautiful lines. It cannot have eſcaped even the moſt careleſs obſerver how much the pathos of the two concluding verſes, where the contending parties are in Homer diſtinguiſhed by their reſpective countries,

Πολλοι γαρ ΤΡΩΩΝ και ΑΧΑΙΩΝ,

is weakened and done away by the general expreſſion in Pope, *ſo fought each hoſt.*

In Homer nothing is caſual, nothing idle or irrelative, *nil molitur inepte.* Every expreſſion is pregnant with meaning. Thus under the few words,

Παρ' ΑΛΛΗΛΟΙΣΙ ΤΕΤΑΝΤΟ,

is conveyed a pathetic moral ſentiment, which ſtrikes home to every man's boſom. Death levels all diſtinctions. In the grave, high and low, rich and poor, friend and foe, reſt promiſcuouſly together.

> Their tears, their little paſſions o'er,
> Their human triumphs now no more. GRAY.

Homer himſelf ſeems to have been fond of this idea; ſo that we have it a very few lines preceding. At the cloſe of the battle, two diſtinguiſhed combatants, a moment before ſo furious and vehemently adverſe to each other, are repreſented at laſt in the ſame ſituation,

παρ' αλληλοισι τεθασθην.

Every reader of taſte and feeling will, no doubt, be ſurpriſed, and equally regret, that this affecting ſentiment in *Pope's Homer*, as it is uſually with great propriety called, is no where to be found. On the whole, therefore, it may not be thought ſuperfluous, nor, it is hoped, preſumptuous, if a new verſion be attempted;

which, however deficient in other reſpects, may at leaſt be more faithful to the original, and more accordant to the preſent occaſion.

Had hither come ſome chief, from wound or fear
Of the keen ſword ſecure, and flying ſpear;
By Pallas led, in ſafety to ſurvey
The glorious action of this well-fought day:
With eye approving he had gaz'd around,
Nor ought to *blame*, nor ought *defective*, found.
For, ſide by ſide, ſtretch'd on the duſty plain
With many a Greek lay many a Trojan ſlain.

In theſe lines then, as they are thus recalled to the original meaning of their author, is, it is ſuſpected, obliquely inſinuated by the Poet an eulogy on his own maſterly execution in the preceding deſcription. The Commentary of Euſtathius evidently leads to this artfully-concealed meaning; though I do not recollect, that it has been intimated by any other commentator. Conſcious, ſays the learned prelate, of his own power, and knowing (agreeably to the ſentiment of the Roman Hiſtorian, *& qui fecere, & qui aliorum facta ſcripſere multi laudantur,*)

tur,) that it is not leſs glorious, nor requiring leſs of ability and exertion to deſcribe great actions, than to perform them, the Poet concludes this book with the lines quoted above.

Ειδως ὁ Ποιητης την αυτε εν ῥητορεια ισχυν, κ᾽ ὡς ουκ εστι καλλιον, κ᾽ μεγαλοπρεπεστερον, κ᾽ αναγωνιωτερον συστηναι μαχην, ἢ αφηγηθηναι, λεγει, κ. τ. λ.

The ſpectator thus led by Pallas is the hearer (or reader) of the poem; who, without ſharing in the perils of the battle, mentally enjoys the glorious ſpectacle in the deſcription which he is reading: and, as he paſſes leiſurely through the lines (i. e. proceeds in the peruſal) diſcovers nothing of *Homer's* ΟΝΟΣΑΣΘΑΙ, to find fault with, or to deſpiſe.

Τοιουτος αν ειη θεατης ὁ του ποιητου ακροατης. Ὁς ου του πολεμου κακων μετεχει, αλλα του των πολεμικων διηγησεων καλα νυν απολαυει καλως θεαμαστος, ακινδυνως την μαχην περιων, κ᾽ μηδεν εχων των ΟΜΗΡΙΚΩΝ ΟΝΟΣΑΣΘΑΙ, ητοι εκφαυλισαι κ᾽ καταμεμψασθαι.

The

The ſame remark, adds the learned ſcholiaſt, may with equal juſtice be extended to every other book of the Iliad. Were the reader conducted under the ſame intellectual guidance through the whole work, he would find every part of this divine poem, not only faultleſs, but tranſcendently ſublime and beautiful.

Ὃν και χειραγωγει ακινδυνως ἡ τοιαυτη Παλλας εις τα ΚΑΘΕΚΑΣΤΑ της Ὁμηρικης ποιησεως, οια συνετην ακροατην——ουδαμως μεμφοιτο αν τις το της μαχης εργον.

The praiſe, ſo juſtly due to his unrivalled excellence, is here aſſumed by the Poet with a modeſty and delicacy, which even the moſt ſcrupulous moraliſt could not diſapprove.

Of the ſame kind is a paſſage in another author, who in general will be little ſuſpected of modeſty and reſerve. In the Nephelæ of Ariſtophanes, one of the actors, after having heard a choral ſong, enquires eagerly,

By Jupiter I intreat thee, O! Socrates, tell me, who are theſe who ſpeak ſo *majeſtically?*

Προς τε Διος αὐλιζολω σε, φρασον τινες εισ', ω Σωκρατες, αὐται
Αι φθεγξαμεναι τετο το ΣΕΜΝΟΝ; A. 1. S. iv.

On which it is obſerved in the ſcholia, that the Poet is here covertly praiſing himſelf; when by the mouth of Strepſiades he calls the ſong of the chorus *majeſtic:* for ſo it really is. But, while he throws theſe praiſes on the Nephelæ, the leading characters in the drama, he thinks by this artifice to eſcape the hazard of giving offence to his audience.

Λεληθοτως, φασιν, ἑαυτον επαινει, ΣΕΜΝΟΝ ειναι λεγων το μελος· εστι γαρ τελο αληθες. Ὁ δε τον επαινον επι τας Νεφελας τρεπων, ουκ οιεται φορτικος ειναι.

It will be entertaining, and not uninſtructive, to obſerve with what conſummate ſkill a great maſter, out of the rude hints, which he caught from the old ſcholiaſt, has formed an elegant and highly finiſhed eulogy on our own immortal dramatiſt. "The knowledge of antiquity," ſays

ſays this[f] accompliſhed writer, "requiſite to ſucceed in them," (maſks *at that time of day in prodigious vogue)* "was, I imagine, the reaſon that Shakeſpear was not over fond of trying his hand at theſe elaborate trifles. Once indeed he did, and with ſuch ſucceſs as to diſgrace the very beſt things of this kind in Johnſon. The ſhort maſk in the Tempeſt is fitted up with claſſical exactneſs. But its chief excellence lies in the beauty of the ſhow, and the richneſs of the poetry. *Shakeſpear was ſo ſenſible of his ſuperiority, that he could not help exulting a little upon it, when he makes Ferdinand ſay,*

> This is a moſt *majeſtic viſion*, and
> Harmonious charming lays." A. iv. S. 1.

You will readily allow me, that this little Eſſay cannot any way be more happily concluded, than with this fine paſſage: I will not therefore detain you a moment longer, than to bid you

Adieu.

NOTES.

LETTTER I.

[a] ADVENTURER, No. 63.

[b] I am much a ſtranger to your perſon, and, what it may, perhaps, be ſcarce *decent* for me to profeſs to you, even to your writings.—Theſe then are the conſiderations, which induced me to employ an *hour or two of leiſure* in giving your book a free examination.

Letter to the Rev. Dr. Thomas Leland, 1764. pp. 279, 280.

[c] Yet I have ſpared you the diſguſt of conſidering thoſe vulgar paſſages, which every body recollects, and ſets down for acknowledged imitations.

Hurd, Marks of Imitation, p. 73. 1757.

[d] Perhaps the firſt that occurred to my thoughts was Mr. ADDISON. But the obſervation holds of others, and of one in particular, (Pope) very much *his ſuperior in true Genius*. Ibid. p. 12.

[e] One of the moſt ſtriking paſſages in the Eſſay on Man, is the following:

Superior Beings, &c.———

Can you doubt? from the ſingularity of the ſentiment, that the great Poet had his eye on Plato, who makes Socrates ſay, in alluſion to a remark of Heraclitus,

Ὅτι ἀνθρώπων ὁ σοφώτατος πρὸς Θεὸν πίθηκος φανεῖται.

Hipp. Major.

The application indeed is different. And it could not be otherwiſe. For the obſervation, which the philoſopher refers πρὸς ΘΕΟΝ, is in the poet given to *Superior Beings* only. The conſequence is, that the Ape is an object of *deriſion* in the former caſe, of *admiration* in the latter.

Ibid. p. 331.

[f] The ſhapes and appearances of things are *apprehended only in the groſs by dull minds*. They think they ſee, but it is through a miſt, where if they catch but a faint glimpſe of the form before them, it is well: more one is not to look for from their *clouded* imaginations.

Hurd, Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation, p. 133. Ed. 1768.

[g] The Publiſher. No. 11.

[h] It is a faithful and pure maiden ſtory, never *blown upon* before, in any language but in Spaniſh.

Letters by James Howell, Eſq. B. IV. L. XI.

As it is delivered in a language you love, and is beſides a paſſage

paſſage not much *blown upon by the dealers in ſuch ſcraps*, I thought it might perhaps afford you ſome amuſement.

Delicacy of Friendſhip. Anon. ſub finem, p. 233.

[i] The concluſion is ſtill *more certain*, when, together with a general likeneſs of ſentiments, we find the *ſame diſpoſition of the parts*; eſpecially if that diſpoſition be in no common form. Marks of Imitation, p. 30.

LETTER II.

[a] See Letter 1. p. 6.

[b] Wakefield's Edition of Gray's Poems, Advertiſement.

[c] It were to be wiſhed that Mr Gray himſelf had ſelected ſome few paſſages of Pindar, by which he might have convinced every reader, how cloſely and happily he has followed Pindar's manner of conducting the ſimile and ſubject together. Huntingford's Apology, p. 80.

[d] Ως δ' ὁποτε πληθων ποταμος πεδιονδε κατεισι,
Χειμαρρος κατ' ορεσφιν, οπαζομενος Διος ομβρω,
Πολλας δε δρυς αζαλεας, πολλας δε τε πευκας
Εσφερεται, πολλον δε τ' αφυσγετον εις ἁλα βαλλει·

Non ſic, aggeribus ruptis cum ſpumeus amnis
Exiit, oppoſitaſque evicit gurgite moles,
Fertur in arva furens cumulo, campoſque per omnes
Cum ſtabulis armenta trahit.——Virg. Æn. II. 496.

[e] Maſon's Ed. of Gray's Works. Note, p. 85.

[f] Vide paſſim Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Book of Revelations, &c.

LETTER III.

[a] Richard the ſecond, (as we are told by ARBP. Scroop, and the confederate Lords in their manifeſto, by Thomas Walſingham and all the older writers) was ſtarved to death. The ſtory of his aſſaſſination by Sir Piers of Exon is of much later date. Gray's Note.

[b] Hurd, Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation, 1753, p. 150.

[c] Ogden's Sermons, 2 vol. Ed. by Dr. Hallifax, 1780. vol. 2. Sermon XI. p. 149.

[d] The obſervation may be extended to all thoſe paſſages (which are innumerable) in our poets, that allude to the rites, cuſtoms, language, and theology of Paganiſm ——*And the management of learned alluſion is to be regarded, perhaps, as one of the niceſt offices of Invention.*

[e] 1 Book of Samuel, c. xvii. v. 49.

Progreſs

[f] Progreſs of Poetry.

[g] Acron, Porphyrion, Anton. Mancinellus, &c.

[h] Mais on peut auſſi fort bien entendre ce "*ſtridor acutus*" du bruit, que font les ailes de la Fortune, dont Horace dit alleurs, "*Si celeres quatit pennas.*" Si la Fortune ſe met a battre des ailes pour ſe envoler.

Dacier, Note, p. 387.

[i] RAPACITER, the regularly-formed adverb, though no where in uſe.

LETTER IV.

[a] I ſhall need no apology to the reader for conducting him ſomewhat leiſurely in what follows, though with all the diſpatch ſo extended a matter will permit, *through the ſeveral branches of it.*

Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation, p. 1.

LETTER V.

[a] It was not thus that an able critic (Mr. Hurd) lately explained Virgil's noble Allegory in the beginning of the third Georgic, where, under the idea of a magnificent temple, to be raiſed to the divinity of Auguſtus, the Poet promiſes the famous epic poem, which he afterwards erected to his honour, or, as our Milton ſays, "built the lofty rhyme." D. L. Ed. by Bp. of Worceſter, p. 302.

[b] It was not enough in your enlarged view of things to reſtore either of theſe models (Ariſtotle or Longinus) to its ancient ſplendour. They were both to be revived; or rather a new original plan of criticiſm to be ſtruck out, which ſhould *unite the virtues of each of them.*

Dedication of the Epiſtle to Auguſtus, with an Engliſh Commentary and Notes, 1753.

[c] The able Critic (Mr. Hurd) looked into F. Catrou, in whom he found all that his maſter (Dr. Warburton) ſo applauds and exalts, (ſee note [a]) only not quite ſo fine-drawn or wire-drawn.

Confuſion worſe Confounded, 1772, p. 74.

Primus Idumæus referam tibi, Mantua, palmas:——
Virg. Geor. iii. 13.

If the *ingenuouſneſs and delicacy* of a R. R. critic, (who is ſaid to have owed his preſent dignity to a note on the context) had not been long known, an *ordinary* reader might be ſtartled at the reſemblance between his Lordſhip's critique and Catrou's; whilſt a *faſtidious one*, in

in a ſplenetic mood, might apply, like another Edwards, the *marks of Imitation*, as ſo many *canons* to annoy their founder. Hiſtory of the Caliph Vathek, 1786. Note, p. 269.

[d] It ſhould be remembered that Mr. Hurd was one of the ableſt ſupports and brighteſt ornaments of this celebrated ſchool.

[e] It would have been more generous and juſt in you to have acknowledged yourſelf indebted to Mr. L. for the application of the meteoric appearances from Caſaubon's Adverſaria to this ſubject; which, when it appeared in your more popular volume, was received with applauſe, as new and very ingenious; an applauſe, which, as you could not but know, belonged to him.

Dr. Lowth's Third Letter to Dr. Warburton, 1766.

Mr. Warburton, who ſuppoſes——which thought, wrong as it is, though he lets it paſs for his own, was borrowed, or more properly *ſtolen*, from a French Romance, called the Life of Sethos.

Cooper's Life of Socrates, 4th Ed. 1771. p. 102.

Les ſectes philoſophiques cherchoient a diviner le dogme caché ſous le voile des ceremonies, & taſchoient de la ramener chacune a leur doctrine dans l'hypotheſe des Epicuriens, adoptée de nos jours par M. M. Le Clerc & Warburton.——Le Clerc *adopted* it in the year 1687. Mr. Warburton *invented* it in the year 1738.

Critical Obſervations on the Sixth Book of the Æneis, 1770. p. 8.

As

As this laſt notion was *publiſhed* in French, ſix years before it was *invented* in Engliſh, the learned author of the D. L. has been ſeverely treated by ſome *ungenerous* adverſaries. Appearances, it muſt be confeſſed, wear a very ſuſpicious aſpect; but what are appearances, when weighed againſt his Lordſhip's, declarations.

Ibid. p. 33. See Note [f].

[f] That I may not continue worſe in your eſteem than I deſerve, give me leave to tell you, that I am *no plagiary from your father. This is a point of honour, in which I am particularly delicate.* I will venture to boaſt again to you, that I believe no author was ever more averſe *to take to himſelf any thing that belonged to another.*

Dr. Warburton's 4th Letter to Dr. Lowth, 1766.

[g] Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation, p. 123.

[h] Ibid. p. 127.

[i] Publica materies privati juris erit, ———

Hor. Ars Poet. 131.

LETTER VI.

To the Reverend Mr. William Warburton.

[a] Reverend Sir,

Give me leave to preſent you with the following eſſay on the Epiſtle to Auguſtus; which, whatever other merit it may want, is ſure of this, that it hath been *plann'd on the beſt model.* Dedication of Horace's Epiſtle, &c.

7 [b] So

[b] So nicely do you underſtand what belongs to this intercourſe of *Learned Friends*, that in the inſtance before us you do not ſeem, I think, to have exceeded the modeſt proportion even of a *temperate and chaſte praiſe*.

Delicacy of Friendſhip, p. 219.

[c] That the ſubterraneous adventures of Æneas were intended by Virgil to repreſent the initiation of his hero, is an *elegant* conjecture, which hath been laid before the public, and *ſet forth to the beſt advantage, by a learned friend*. Jortin, Diſſertation vi. p. 239.

[d] Letter of Dr. Warburton to Dr. Jortin, November 10, 1755.

[e] His (Warburton's) ſervile flatterers (ſee the *baſe and malignant* eſſay on the Delicacy of Friendſhip) exalting their maſter far above Ariſtotle and Longinus, aſſaulted every modeſt diſſenter, who refuſed to conſult the oracle, and adore the idol.

Lord Sheffield's Life of Mr. Gibbon, p. 137.

[f] Delicacy of Friendſhip.

[g] The advantages of friendſhip are *reciprocal*; and, *though it be very clear to other people which is the gainer by this intercourſe*, who knows but Dr. Jortin, in his great modeſty, might ſuppoſe the odds to lie on his ſide.

Ibid. p. 230.

[h] From the year 1749 to the year 1758.

To remove the myſterious veil, which hath long hung darkly over the tranſactions of certain literary men, eminent

nent in their day, and the more decisively to vindicate the character of Dr. Jortin from the unprovoked attacks injuriously made upon it by those, who, as they daily saw, ought to have respected his virtues and abilities, it has been suggested, that it would be an act of justice to make these letters public.

[i] See Letter, v. p. 54.

[k] I have read your *Dissertation on the Principles of Human Eloquence*, and shall very readily, I dare say, be indulged in the liberty I am going to take, of giving you my free thoughts upon it. I shall do it *with all the regard that is due from one scholar to another.* Letter to the Reverend Dr. Thomas Leland, Introduction.

LETTER VII.

[a] See Letter v. Note [a].

[b] Hurd's Note, p. 44.

[c] Gray's Poems by Mr. Mason.
Progress of Poetry, Note p. 18.

[d] The whole conception, we shall see, is of the utmost grandeur and magnificence; though, according to the usual

uſual management of the poet, (which, as *not being apprehended* by his critics, hath furniſhed occaſion, *even to the beſt of them*, to charge him with the want of the ſublime.) &c. Hurd's Note, p. 38.

[c] Under this encouragement, I could not withſtand the temptation of diſcloſing thus much of one of the nobleſt fictions of Antiquity; and the rather, as the *propriety of allegoric compoſition*, &c. Ibid. p. 48.

LETTER VIII.

[a] See Letter v. Note [c].

[b] Of theſe his love of letters and of virtue, his veneration of great and good men, *his delicacy of honour in not aſſuming to himſelf or depreſſing the merit of others*, his readineſs to give their due to all men of real deſert, whoſe principles he oppoſes, and ———.

Delicacy of Friendſhip, p. 216.

[c] See Letter v. Note [d].

[d] Ibid. Note [a].

[e] Yet I muſt needs think him (Warburton) conſiderably above *Minellius* and *Farnaby*, and *almoſt equal to old Servius* himſelf, though perhaps *one doth not find in him the ſingular ingenuity you admire in the laſt of theſe critics.*

Delicacy of Friendſhip, p. 219.

LETTER IX.

[a] Eſſay on the Principles of Tranſlation, ſaid to be written by Dr. Tytler.

[b] Ως εφαθ· Εκτωρ δ' ουτ' εχαρη μεγα μυθον ακουσας·
Και ρ' ες μεσσον ιων, τρωων επεστεργε φαλαγγας,
Μεσσα δορος ελων· ———— Il. iii. 76.

He ſaid. The challenge Hector heard with joy,
Then with his ſpear reſtrain'd the youth of Troy,
Held by the midſt athwart, and near the foe,
Advanc'd with ſteps majeſtically ſlow.

Hector ſtays not to reply to his brother, but runs away with the challenge immediately, &c. Note [b], v. 109.

The ſpirit of the original is as juſtly conceived in Mr. Pope's note, as it is unhappily miſrepreſented in his tranſlation; and both together produce the following contradictory medley.

Hector does not ſtay to reply to his brother, but *runs* away *immediately* with ſteps——*majeſtically ſlow*.

Wood's Eſſay on the original genius of Homer, 1755. p. 78.

LETTER X.

[a] Plutarch, περι ΤΟΥ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ ΕΠΑΙΝΕΙΝ ΑΝΕΠΙΦΘΟΝΩΣ.

[b] Το καυχασθαι παρα καιρον
Μανιαισιν ὑποκρεκει. Pind. Ol. ix. 58.

[c] Γαρυεμεν. γαρυεTON Oxonienſes.
See Dawe's Miſc. Crit. Ed. Burgeſſ. p. 52.

[d] πΕτανοις.

Omnes, quantum video, ubique; quod unde, aut cur, in πΟτανοις Oxonienſes mutarint, nec apparet, niſi forte ex Pyth. viii. 46. Occurit utrumque.

HEYNE.

[e] Four ſwans ſuſtain a car of ſilver bright,
With heads advanc'd, and pinions ſtretch'd for flight:
Here like ſome furious prophet Pindar rode,
And ſeem'd to labour with th' inſpiring God, &c.
Temple of Fame, v. 210.

[f] Marks of Imitation, pp. 24, 25.

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